THE UK'S BIGGEST REGIONAL GAY LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

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I'm FREE!

ZONE

APRIL 2017 ISSUE 240

FIND OUT YOUR AWARD WINNERS

Yep, the votes have been counted and verified!

WHAT'S YOUR FETISH?

Everything you need to fulfill your fetish needs

YIPPEE! WE'RE CELEBRATING OUR 20TH YEAR ISSUE!

YOUR ESSENTIAL NIGHTLIFE + CLUBBING GUIDE

Oi! DANCING BOY!

We review Billy Elliot: The Musical

IS THIS THE HOTTEST BIRMINGHAM PRIDE LINE-UP YET?

INTERVIEW

SAARA AALTO

Lesbian X Factor finalist heads to Birmingham Pride

+

VIRAL FASHION GADGETS WHAT'S ON COMPETITIONS

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'HAPPY HOUR' (£2.50) DRINKS FROM 2PM-10PM!
WITH CABARET FROM ***'ROSE GARDEN' (MIDNIGHT)***
+ KARAOKE WITH JOEYOKE **(FROM 8PM)** & MUSIC FROM **DJ CILLA**

SUN 30th APRIL

OPEN UNTIL 6AM

FREE ENTRY B4 11PM

BANK HOLIDAY PARTY NIGHT

'HAPPY HOUR' (£2.50) DRINKS FROM 2PM-10PM!
WITH CABARET FROM ***'WILMA FINGADOO' (MIDNIGHT)***
+ KARAOKE WITH JOEYOKE **(FROM 8PM)** & MUSIC FROM **DJ CILLA**

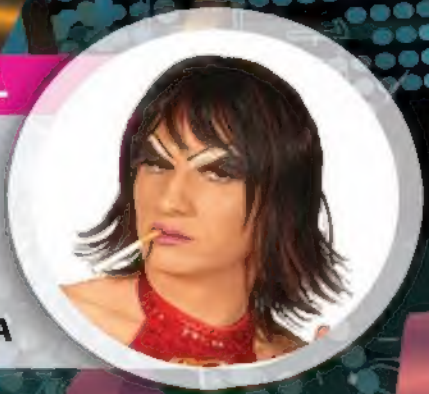

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Photo courtesy of Clonezone

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'ONE OF THE MOST LAVISH SHOWS YOU WILL EVER SEE. BREATHTAKING. SIMPLY AMAZING'
EILE MAGAZINE

ONE WEEK ONLY!

BILL KENWRIGHT PRESENTS

JOHN PARTRIDGE ADRIAN ZMED

La Cage AUX FOLLES

A LAVISH NEW PRODUCTION OF THE AWARD WINNING MUSICAL EXTRAVAGANZA
WINNER
11 TONY AWARDS
2 OLIVIERS
28 NOMINATIONS

LA CAGE AUX FOLLES MUSIC & LYRICS BY JERRY HERMAN BOOK BY HARVEY FIERSTEIN BASED ON THE PLAY BY JEAN POIRET
DIRECTED BY MARTIN CONNOR CHOREOGRAPHY BY BILL DEAMER DESIGN BY GARY McCANN WIGS & MAKE-UP DESIGN BY RICHARD MAWBEY

ALSO FEATURING
MARTI WEBB

AND OF COURSE
LES CAGELLES

FEATURING THE HIT SONGS... *I AM WHAT I AM* * *THE BEST OF TIMES* * *WITH YOU ON MY ARM*...AND MORE.

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Have ya heard?

Netflix **RuPaul's Drag Race** stars UK hopeful - Charlie Hides

Netflix is currently streaming brand new episodes of RuPaul's Drag Race, a day after they're being aired in the US.
Season nine of the hit reality show began in late March and features British favourite Charlie Hides.
UK viewers can catch the show on Saturdays via Netflix.

British drag queen Charlie Hides - who often performs at Eden Bar in Birmingham - is the UK star of the current series of RuPaul's Drag Race

Grindr releases cheeky gay emojis

Popular gay dating app Grindr has released its own range of gay emoji. The collection includes a host of aubergine emoji, including one with a ring on it, a floppy one and even a pierced one. Check out the update to Grindr for the full range.

Joe McElderry brings The Gloria Tour to Brum

To celebrate the release of his fifth studio album, gay X Factor star Joe McElderry is heading out on a nationwide live tour.
Joe, who's currently starring in a UK touring version of hit musical Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, will visit the Midlands in the summer with The Gloria Tour.
The musical theatre favourite said he's 'hugely excited' to be hitting the road with his new tour, and also to be promoting his album, Saturday Night At The Movies, from July 2017.
The Gloria Tour lands at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre on Thursday 27 July.

Coventry Pride announces acts for 2017 festival

Organisers of Coventry Pride have announced a host of local acts. Feryl, One Week Stand, The Prophets, SKA Woody and a Lady Gaga tribute act will all feature on Saturday 10 June.
Sunday 11 June sees a day of drag and comedy, with trans comedienne Holly Stevens, Sassy Africa and Marilyn Misandry all featuring.
For more information, visit coventrypride.org.uk

'90s pop star Kavana announced for Warwickshire Pride

Warwickshire Pride has announced that '90s pop star Kavana will be headlining this year's festival when it returns to the Pump Room Gardens in Leamington Spa on Saturday 19 August.

Following a string of hit singles in the late 1990s, Kavana has enjoyed a renaissance in recent years after being part of ITV2's The Big Reunion in 2013 and Celebrity Big Brother in 2015.

Texas bring new tour to the Midlands

With new album Jump On Board coming out on 21 April, Texas has announced 21 UK dates this autumn.

Written and produced by band stalwarts Johnny McElhone and Sharleen Spiteri, Jump On Board is the first new Texas studio album since The Conversation in 2013. It's being described as 'nothing short of a pop classic' by the record label.

Texas play Symphony Hall, Birmingham, on Sunday 1 October.

Wicked returns to Birmingham!

2018 sees smash-hit musical Wicked returning to Birmingham Hippodrome - and let us tell you now... tickets have just gone on sale!

So before you start screeching Defying Gravity at the top of your voice, may we suggest you snap up a ticket for this multi-award-winning classic of a musical and get yourself a front-row seat while you can.

Wicked shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from 4 to 29 April 2018.

Hairspray musical back in the Midlands

Camp musical Hairspray is returning to the Midlands. The London production of Hairspray has been nominated for a record-setting 11 Laurence Olivier Awards, winning in three categories, including Best New Musical. Hairspray runs at Birmingham Hippodrome from Monday 2 until Saturday 7 October & Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Monday 26 February until Saturday 3 March. Tickets are on sale now at grandtheatre.co.uk

£3.5 billion 'UK Disneyland' theme park to open...

A theme park which is being dubbed the 'UK Disneyland' - steady as she goes there, Disney lovers, it's not actually a *Disney* venture (boo hoo!) - is set to open in Dartford, Kent, in the next five years.

Estimated to cost £3.5billion, the attraction will open by 2022 if plans submitted by London Resort Company Holdings are approved.

The park will feature attractions inspired by the Hollywood movies of Paramount Pictures, BBC productions and Wallace & Gromit creators Aardman Animations.

Due to be the first of its kind in the UK, the new theme park is set to feature more than 50 rides and attractions, as well as a 2,000-seat theatre. The park will contain zones such as Adventure Isle, Land Of Legends, Cartoon Circus, Starfleet Command, Action Square, Port Paramount and Entertainment City.

A full-price day ticket is expected to cost customers £57 each.

Fingers crossed the project gets the big green light, eh?...

Have ya heard?

Strictly judge to direct new Dusty Springfield musical

A 'heartwarming' new musical showcasing the songs of Dusty Springfield is stopping off in Birmingham this autumn.

Directed and choreographed by Strictly Come Dancing judge Craig Revel Horwood, Son Of A Preacher Man visits the city's New Alexandra Theatre from Tuesday 12 to Saturday 16 September.

The production will feature a selection of the late singer's best-loved songs - including the famous title track, with which she enjoyed a transatlantic hit in 1968. Tickets are on sale now.

La La Land with 60-piece orchestra comes to Brum

Academy Award-winning movie La La Land is set to be screened alongside a live 60-piece orchestra in Birmingham.

Having won 180 awards, including six Oscars and seven Golden Globes, La La Land was one of the biggest movies of 2016.

An American romantic musical comedy-drama, the film stars the hot and hunky Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone as a musician and aspiring actress who fall in love in Los Angeles.

The show visits Birmingham's Symphony Hall on 24 September.

Birmingham's Glamorous gets major makeover

Birmingham gay venue Glamorous is set to undergo a radical transformation this month, according to owners Matthew Eason and Sam Hibbert, who took over the venue in December 2015.

The local businessmen commented: "We're putting a significant investment into this refurbishment to bring the venue even more up to date, while at the same time ensuring we retain the essence of what our customers really love about Glamorous."

The big reveal will happen on Bank Holiday Sunday, 30 April.

The event is set to feature RuPaul's Drag Race's UK Ambassador The Vivienne, who will officially launch the all-new Glamorous Birmingham.

Popular dating show Streetmate is back!

Popular dating series Streetmate is returning to Channel Four, with I'm A Celebrity winner Scarlett Moffatt as its new presenter.

The show is on the lookout for single people who'd like to hit the streets in the hope of finding a date.

Applicants must be over 18 years of age and can apply by emailing streetmate@tigeraspect.co.uk

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Health & care information you can trust

Local Life Story

Name: David Dindol

Place of birth: London (within the sound of bow bells)

Star sign: Libra

Age: 58

About David Dindol

Where did you grow up?

London.

Single or attached?

Single.

What makes you happy?

Going to London to see family and friends.

What makes you sad?

Pets suffering.

What makes you angry?

Bad manners.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?

To be younger and lighter.

What's been the most embarrassing thing you've done in your life?

Can't remember his name.

Now that same-sex marriage has been legalised, would you consider getting married?

Maybe.

Coming Out

When did you first know you were gay?

14.

When did you come out?

I never really came out. Back in the '70s it wasn't the done thing. I just got on with my life and avoided the subject. So technically I'm not out yet... shh, don't tell anyone!

What was school like for you as a gay teenager?

Being gay wasn't a subject I approached. I was known to my peers as the comedian, so school life was bearable yet secretive.

Who was the first person you told you were gay, and what was their reaction?

A close girl friend. She said, about bloody time - we always knew.

What would you say to a youngster trying to come to terms with their own sexuality?

These days it's more acceptable, but I can assure you, accepting who you are is easier than living a lie.

Have you ever had any experiences with the opposite sex?

Eugh! Platinum gold member here, darling.

Quickfire

Who's your favourite actor?

Brad Davies.

What's your favourite book?

Anything by James Patterson.

Half empty or half full?

Half full.

What's your favourite food?

Sushi.

And how about your favourite drink?

Vodka.

Madonna or Lady Gaga?

At my age it should be Liza or Barbra, Barbra.

If you could take a selfie with one person, alive or dead, who would it be?

Judy and Liza.

Gay Scene

Why did you choose Missing and Birmingham?

After living in London and running a successful gay club for many years, I reached a point where I was hungry for new challenges. It was time to start a new chapter in my life. After having a pub restaurant in the West Midlands, I chose to make Birmingham my permanent base. When Missing became available, Wayne and myself decided to go for it, and we've never looked back.

How long have you been frequenting the Midlands gay scene?

Since I moved to Birmingham in 2006.

And what's been your fondest memory of the scene?

Although it was a devastating time, the lead up and day of Mykee's funeral would be it. To see a community from every walk of life, venues and businesses pull together the way they did for one person is one of the most humbling and soul-restoring things I've ever witnessed. It proves that, when needed, a community can set aside their differences and unite for a common cause

Who's your favourite cabaret act on the gay scene?

Sandra.

Who's your favourite person on the gay scene?

Any of our lovely, loyal customers.

What do you most enjoy about the gay scene?

Seeing people of every creed and colour co-exist and enjoy themselves under one roof.

What have you noticed about the way the gay scene's changed over the years?

You no longer have to hide your sexuality. Gay venues are no longer places just for gay people. It's so diverse now that everyone can enjoy them.

How would you change the gay scene?

I think we're on the right track. The gay scene is always evolving to whatever the current trend is.

Your Career

When you were younger, what did you want to be?

A chef.

What was your first job when you left school?

Commis chef.

When did you get involved with Missing?

In 2008.

What's your role at Missing?

Product tester, quality control and bill payer.

What are the challenges in your job?

Patsy.

What are the highlights?

There have been so many, but if I were to choose a few - being part of the country's largest LGBT community, seeing it grow and develop, and playing host to one of the biggest Pride festivals in the country.

Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

Depends on my lottery numbers.

Any funny stories?

Too many to tell, but at our staff parties, Patsy attempting karaoke. Our staff's love lives would make for a good Carry On film.

Time Out

Where do you like to go on a night out?

A nice restaurant.

What do you do to relax?

Cook, go to the theatre and have a massage.

What do you enjoy on telly?

EastEnders.

What was the last album or track you bought? Bought?

Get with the times - we stream.

Which one website do you spend the most time on?

My parental controls won't let me post it.

Which type of holiday do you prefer?

Beach holiday in Sitges or Thailand.

Happy 20th

1997
ZONE
1998
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Stepping To The Stars
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in the Pink!
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ZONE

Birthday to us!

We're 20 years old this month...

It isn't only Birmingham Pride which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. Here at Midlands Zone, we're lighting 20 candles for our very own birthday cake too!

April 1997 was the month that Zone launched, just one month before the very first Birmingham Pride event. And how very different the magazine looked way back in those late 20th century, pre social networking, 'dawn of New Labour' days.

The big interview was with Lily Savage, who was our front cover star too. That first ever issue also featured such long gone attractions as the tongue in cheek Zone horoscopes and the greatly missed Mike Parker column.

The last 20 years have been a fascinating time for the gay community, not only here in the Midlands but also at a national and global level.

The fight for equality has seen plenty of scuffles, both verbal and physical. The outlawing of Section 28 and introduction of gay marriage both feature high on the list of LGBT achievements during that time.

Here at Midlands Zone, we've been proud to keep you in touch with what's been happening in the wider community. More than any thing, though, we've felt privileged to chronicle the development and evolu tion of the gay scene and LGBT com munity here in the Midlands region.

This 20th anniversary issue is not only an important milestone, it's also the first edition to showcase our brand new look.

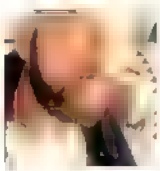
For starters, there's a striking new front cover design (actually, there are two this month - one featuring Saara Aalto, the other featuring a seriously hot guy, to high light our fetish feature.

We've also gone to a handy new size, so that if you're looking at Zone on your tablet or mobile, the entire page is now in view!

As a magazine which has always prided itself on being contemporary and cutting edge, Midlands Zone is looking to the future Not only will it continue to grow and develop as a great read, it will also continue to serve and inform the people for whom it is, and always has been, published the Mid lands LGBT community We hope you enjoy it!

> **"we've felt privileged to be able to chronicle the development and evolution of the gay scene and community here in the Midlands region"**

Martin



HOTTER THAN HELL

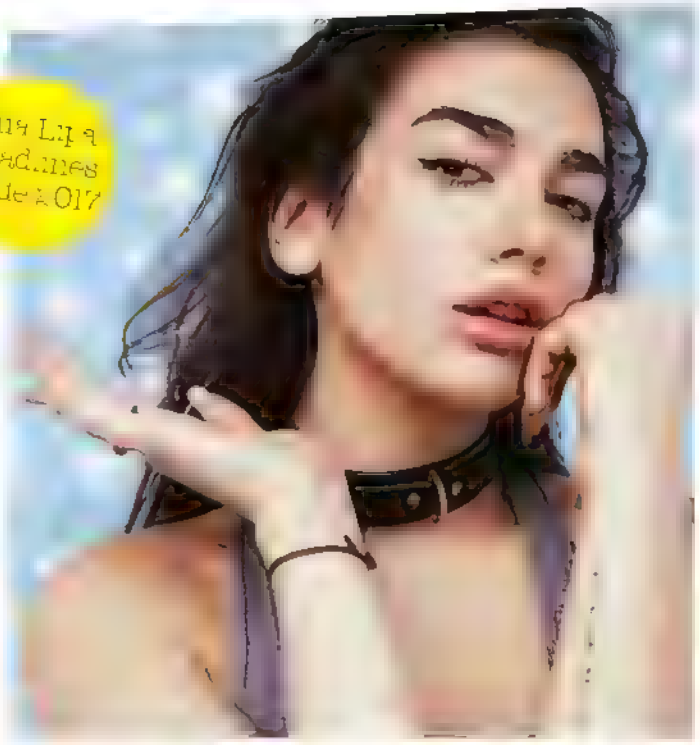
The BIGGEST and HOTTEST line-up for Birmingham Pride EVER!

They've really done it this time! Birmingham Pride have only gone and announced what is the biggest soundtrack to the festival ever!

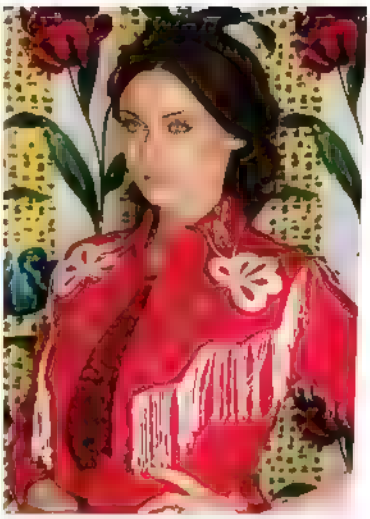
Take a look at just three of the festival's headline artists, **Dua Lipa, Jonas Blue and Sigala.** They've all enjoyed massive hits: Dua Lipa with Be The One, No Lie and Hotter Than Hell; Jonas Blue with Perfect Stranger, Fast Car and By Your Side (featuring RAYE - who's also performing at the event); and Sigala with Sweet Lovin and Easy Love. Remarkably **just those tracks alone have notched up an impressive one billion+ views on YouTube** - and goodness knows how many times they've been streamed!

So add up all the YouTube views from all the artists appearing at this year's festival and collectively you'll probably arrive at a figure of several billion. We would've given you a precise tally, but we really couldn't be arsed - but we're sure you get the point we're making? Of course you do.

Yep, you've got yourselves one hell of a line-up for this year's Pride! Be safe and enjoy it (well, assuming you've got your tickets?).



Dreams can come true... it's Gabrielle



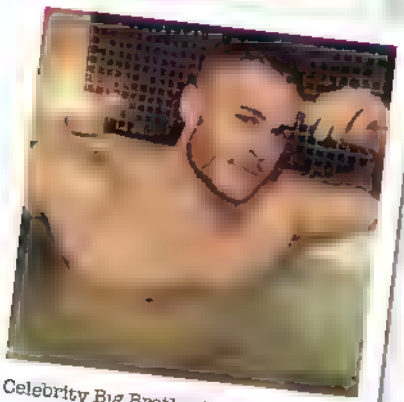
Sophie Ellis Bextor confirmed

Your TOP 15 soundtracks to Birmingham Pride

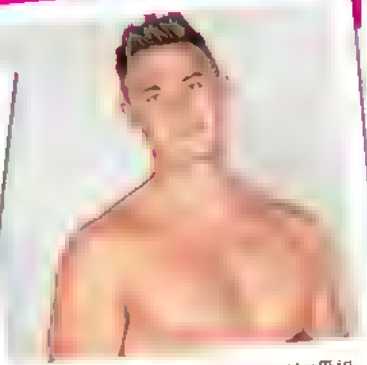
based on YouTube views

1. Perfect Strangers - Jonas Blue 248 million views
2. Fast Car - Jonas Blue 223 million views
3. Sweet Lovin' - Sigala 155 million views
4. Easy Love - Sigala 125 million views
5. Be The One - Dua Lipa 110 million views
6. Tears ft. Louisa Johnson 101 million views
7. Scared To Be Lonely - Dua Lipa 96 million views
8. No Lie - Dua Lipa 88 million views
9. You Don't Know Me ft. RAYE 69 million views
10. By Your Side - Jonas Blue ft RAYE 41 million views
11. Blow Your Mind (Mwah) - Dua Lipa 34 million views
12. Hotter Than Hell - Dua Lipa 30 million views
13. Give Me Your Love - Sigala 25 million views
14. So Good - Louisa Johnson 16 million views
15. Murder On The Dancefloor- Sophie Ellis-Bextor 14 million views

HOT BOYS HOSTING AT PRIDE...

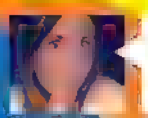


Celebrity Big Brother's Austin Armacost hosts on Sat 27 May



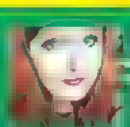
MTV's Geordie Shore star Scotty T is co-hosting the Main Stage on Sun 28 May

What some people are saying about this year's line-up on social media:



"OMG heaven! I'll be there even if I have to come on my own!! No pun intended!"
Terri Brown - Coventry.

"Pride tickets booked, hotel booked. Cannot wait!"
Kirk Richards - Bromsgrove.



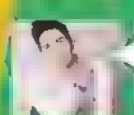
"Birmingham Pride! Yass My fave weekend of the year!"
Kayleigh - Glasgow.

"OMFG we are going to Pride defo now... I love Dua Lipa!"
Adam Booth - Wolverhampton.

"Excited for Birmingham Pride this year"
Gabriella Ragno - Birmingham.

"Legit can't wait for Birmingham Pride!"
Nathan Leah - Shrewsbury.

"We're doing Pride!"
Matt Walker - Birmingham.



"Birmingham Pride Dua Lipa! Looking forward to this!"
Scott McGlynn - London.

"Yeah I love all Dua Lipa's songs I'm game for this"
Ellie Keedwell - Bristol.

SATURDAY 27 MAY

MAIN STAGE

DUA LIPA

BASEMENT JAXX

jonas BLUE

LOUISA JOHNSON

M.O

RAYE

BETSY

HERCVLES & LOVE AFFAIR

NADIA ROSE

SAARA

AALTO

HOST: AUSTIN ARMACOST

DANCE ARENA

TOUGH LOVE

OFFICIAL NANCIE

PETE GRAHAM RUE JAY BRANDON ROSS OAKLEY JADE MARIE & ASH TURNER
JAMES SILVER SANDI G CAVNA PEARCE M PHIL J LARRY HAN

CABARET MARQUEE

TOPPING & BUTCH

VICKY JACKSON

SANDRA LOLA LASAGNE MISS JASON SON OF A TUTU TANYA HYDE
KELLY WILDE TOPSIE REDFERN KARA VAN PARK feat MISS MARTY
MISS PENNY BAGA CHIPZ MAISIE TROLLETTE THE DIVINE MISS M
SOMEONE AT THE DOOR SAMBA BAND

ALT CLUB STAGE

CAKES DA KILLA DAI BUGER
DJ JAY JAY REVLON FT. LONDON BALLROOM SCENE
NI-KU BITCH SLAP WUT CLUB KILLGLASS + MORE!

Sat 27 & Sun 28 May
Birmingham Gay Village

UNLIMITED TICKETS + INFO: birminghampride.com

Principle Sponsor HSBC

Cabaret Marquee Sponsor manchester airport

SMIRNOFF Southside

Official Media Partner Midlands ZONE

SUNDAY 28 MAY

MAIN STAGE

Gabrielle

Sigala.

SOPHIE ELLIS-BEXTOR

Jamelia

FEATURING MAIZIE WILLIAMS

Boney M.

HOSTED BY: GEORDIE SHORE'S

SCOTTY T

CHARLOTTE CHURCH'S LATE NIGHT POP DUNGEON

CAPITAL B CO-HOST: SEANN MILEY MOORE

DANCE ARENA

KISSY SELL OUT THE STICKMEN

MARC SPENCE TOM SHORTERZ JOE HUNT DONKIE PUNCH ANDRE AMOUR
BEVER DAN HARRIS MARCUS JAMES MARK LEVITT STUART 'COOKIE' COOKE

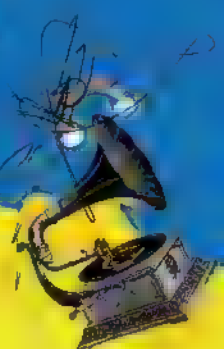
CABARET MARQUEE

THE DE EXPERIENCE

SANDRA MISS THUNDERFUSSY DRAG WITH NO NAME
LADY IMELDA DAVINA DE CAMPO CHAMPAGNE SHIRLEY MISS MARTY
CHEDDAR GORGEOUS KARA VAN PARK TWIGGY VICKI VIVACIOUS
MARTHA D'ARTHUR AMY LA QUEEFA GAVINA VAGINA

ALT CLUB STAGE

MYKKI BLANCO PUSSY PALACE
CLUB FIERCE MOHO BITCH SLAP + MORE!



'LOVE + PRIDE' CARNIVAL PARADE
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And the Lifetime Achievement Award goes to...

We think you'll all agree that there isn't anyone more deserving of this year's Lifetime Achievement Award than Paul Oliver

As Managing Director of What's On Magazine for almost 20 years, Paul was heavily involved in the launch of the first ever Midlands Zone magazine in 1997, from which point he worked relentlessly to promote the gay scene across the Midlands His humour and often 'potty mouth' was much appreciated by many of the magazine's regulars, with whom he forged long lasting relationships.

On 1 December 2014, Paul suffered a massive heart attack which resulted in a hypoxic brain injury and left us all in bits. To say those early days were tough would be an understatement. Paul was unrecognisable - unable to walk, talk, swallow (we now laugh about this one), feed or do anything for himself.

The days when he took those first steps and uttered those first - albeit brief - words were undescribable.

It's been an incredibly tough time for Paul but we're pleased to say that more than 2 years on, he continues to astound us with his progress. Our offices continue to be a second home for Paul, to which he makes regular visits as part of his rehabilitation

One thing that has remained a staple throughout (apart from those very early days), is Paul's mischievous sense of humour. We're so chuffed for you Paul

Paul Oliver

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION EMAIL: **RYAN@MIDLANDSZONE.CO.UK**

Midlands
ZONE Readers' Awards 2017

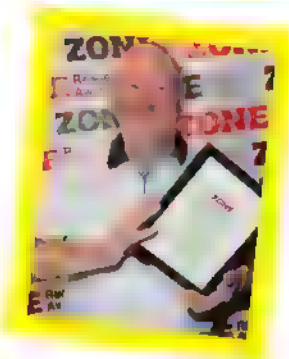
Winners announced!

Brum's Eden Bar scoops 7 awards

The big winners this year were Garry and Ca from Eden, scooping seven awards and numerous first runners-up awards too!

WINNERS:

Best Birmingham Gay Bar
Best Midlands Bar for Men
Best Midlands Community Venue
Best Midlands Front-of-House Team
Best Midlands Security Team
Best Bar D.J. Dan Williams
Best National Cabaret Act Danny Beard



Is Andy a lesbian winner again?

He's been running premier lesbian bar The Fox for 20 years now - and Andy King has an unblemished record of winning the Best Bar For Women award every bloody year! Well done, Andy!

Lawrence wins again!

Okay, so we've given up counting exactly how many times Lawrence Barton has won the Scene Personality Of The Year award - but a big well done anyway, lollipop!

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SUNDAY 16TH APRIL
EASTER SUNDAY

AND THE GREAT BIG EASTER EGG GIVEAWAY!

Missing

Midlands ZONE Readers' Awards 2017

more WINNERS announced!

XXL

win back Best One-Nighter award!

Birmingham's biggest and best men-only club night, the hot and horny XXL at The Core, scoops the Best One-Nighter award once again! It's a great event and a well deserved award!

Best Overall Gay Venue award goes to... The Loft

Yes, it's a first-time win for the new-look Loft! The cafe bar & restaurant scooped not only the coveted award for Best Overall Gay Venue in Birmingham but another three awards as well.

WINNERS

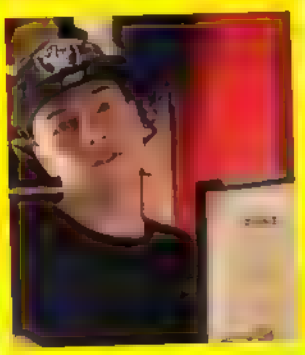
Best Overall Birmingham Gay Venue
Best Midlands Cafe Bar/ Restaurant
Best New Or Refurbished Venue
Best Outside Smoking Area

Best National Cabaret Act

Awwww!
Apparently Danny Beard was so chuffed when he heard he'd won the award for Best National Cabaret Act that he even shed a tear! Well done, Danny!

Missing Bar's Jack Owen wins Best Front Of House award...

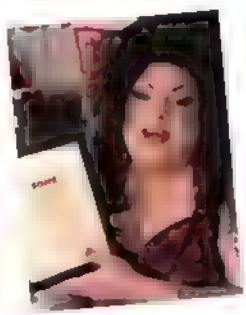
After what seems like 100 years, former winner Garry Prentice has been pipped to the post by a new kid on the block... congrats to Missing Bar's Jack Owen!



La Queefa

is your new Best Midlands Cabaret Act award winner

Last year's winner Miss Penny must be fuming! Well, actually, she's not... Miss Penny congratulated La Queefa - who looked totally dumbfounded when Missing boss David Dindol told her the good news that she'd won the award!



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WHAT'S YOUR FETISH?
FIND OUT YOUR AWARD WINNERS
Oi! DANCING BOY!
SAARA AALTO
Lesbian X Factor finalist heads to Birmingham Pride
IS THIS THE HOTTEST BIRMINGHAM PRIDE LINE-UP YET?

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Midlands ZONE Readers' Awards 2017

more WINNERS announced!

Birmingham LGBT wins Best Charity/Group Of Achievement... again!

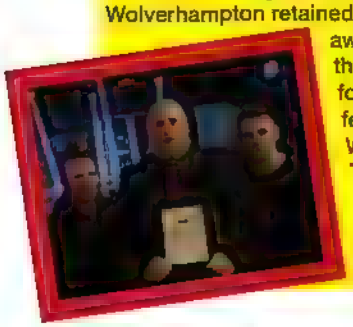
Congratulations to Steph Keeble, David Viney (both pictured here) and the entire team at Birmingham LGBT for winning our Best LGBT Charity/Group Of Achievement award once again! And congrats to them also for picking up the Best LGBT Event award for their Pink Picnic In The Park!

Birmingham Gay Symphony Orchestra WINS Best LGBT Social Group award...

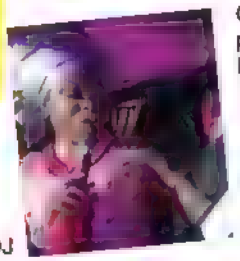
In recent years, this award was been dominated by sports groups - so congratulations to Birmingham Gay Symphony Orchestra for coming out on top and showing us all a nice bit of arts and culture!

Gorgeous Club retains the Best Club and Overall Venue awards!

Sean Keasey, Ricki Wellman and the team at Gorgeous in Wolverhampton retained the awards they've won for the last few years... Well done, Team Gorgeous!

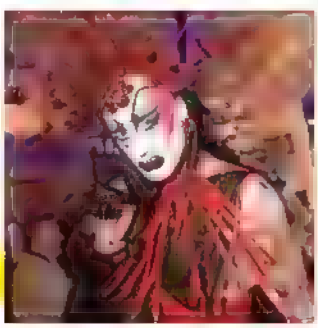


Village Inn still on TOP for Live Entertainment award



Cabaret act Son Of A Tutu picked up the award on behalf of the team at the Village Inn for Best Midlands Live Entertainment Venue - which they seem to have won more times than the Midlands Zone team have had hot dinners!

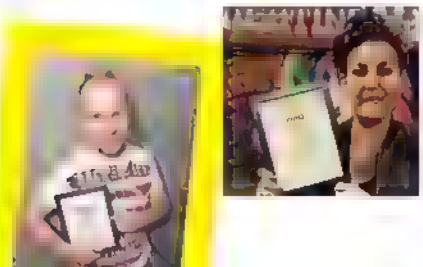
Best Host goes to Twiggy...



Despite stiff competition, the Best Midlands Compere & Host award went to Missing Bar's Twiggy - a drag artist who's been on the scene for over 20 years! Big congratulations to Queeny too, who was first runner-up!

DJ Dan & DJ Corey win again!

It was something of a given that Eden DJ Dan Williams would win the Best Bar DJ award for the umpteenth time! Meanwhile, DJ Corey was delighted to grab back the Best Midlands Club DJ award.



Nightingale wins top award

Queeny and Miss Marty accepted the award for Best Birmingham Gay Nightclub and were said to be 'chuffed to bits'. Congratulations, guys!

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Here's the full list of WINNERS and first runners-up!

Midlands ZONE Readers' Awards 2017

Midlands Zone Lifetime Achievement Award
Paul Oliver

Best Midlands Bar DJ
Winner Dan Williams - Eden Bar
Runner-up Deano Trickett - Village Inn
Other finalists
Mike Emery Missing
Richard Moon Village Inn
Laqueefa The Fox

Best Midlands Club DJ
Winner Corey Hadley - The Nightingale
Runner-up Paul Morrell - XXL
Other finalists
Shaun Baxter Gorgeous
Lisa Sharred Nightingale
Rob Lambeth Helsinki

Best Midlands Front of House Person
Winner
Jack Owen - Missing
Runner-up
Garry Prentice - Eden
Other finalists
Hilli Fletcher The Fox
Laszio Holo Eden
Dale Murphy Gorgeous

Midlands Gay Venue with the Best FOH Team
Winner Eden
Runner-up Village Inn
Other finalists
Dover Castle
The Boston
The Nightingale

Best Midlands Security Person
Winner Kevin Pearson - The Village Inn
Runner-up Jermaine Holder - Eden
Other finalists
Dom Dawes Nightingale
Macawley Brazzill Dover Castle
Lisa Wallace The Fox

Midlands Gay Venue with the Best Security Team
Winner Eden
Runner-up Missing
Other finalists
Gossip
The Nightingale
Helsinki

Best Midlands Compere / Host
Winner Twiggy
Runner-up Queeny
Other finalists
Charlotte the Harlotte
Marty Smith
Miss Penny

Best Midlands Cabaret Act
Winner Laqueefa
Runner-up Miss Penny
Other finalists
Glitter Lips
Twiggy
Vicky Jackson

Best National Cabaret Act
Winner Danny Beard
Runner-up Sandra
Other finalists
La Voix
DE Experience
Drag With No Name

Midlands Scene Personality of the Year
Winner
Lawrence Barton
Runner-up
Garry Prentice
Other finalists
Marty Smith
Miss Penny
Cindy Edwards

Best Birmingham Overall Gay Venue
Winner The Loft
Runner-up Eden
Other finalist
Missing
The Nightingale
The Village Inn

Best Birmingham Gay Nightclub
Winner The Nightingale
Runner-up Club Chic
Other finalists
Boltz
The Core
Glamorous

Best Midlands Gay Nightclub (outside Birmingham)
Winner Gorgeous
Runner-up Helsinki
Other finalists
Gossip
The Lion
Rainbows

Best Birmingham Gay Bar
Winner Eden
Runner-up Village Inn
Other finalists
The Loft
Missing
The Fox

Best Midlands Gay Bar (outside Birmingham)
Winner The Lion
Runner-up Rainbow & Dove
Other finalists
Dover Castle
Pink
The White Hart

Best Midlands Overall Gay Venue (outside Birmingham)
Winner Gorgeous
Runner-up The Lion
Other finalists
Dover Castle
Gossip
Helsinki

Best Midlands Community Venue
Winner Eden
Runner-up The Fox
Other finalists
Dover Castle
Equator
The Welington

Best Midlands Café Bar/Restaurant
Winner The Loft
Runner-up
Rainbow & Dove
Other finalists
The Wellington
The Red Lion
Sidewalk

Best Midlands Bar/Club for Men
Winner Eden
Runner-up Boltz
Other finalists
The Fountain Inn
The Core
The Lion

Best Midlands Bar/Club for Women
Winner The Fox
Runner-up Nightingale
Other finalists
Gossip
Sidewalk
Gorgeous

Best Midlands Gay Venue Outdoor Area
Winner The Loft
Runner-up Eden
Other finalists
Dover Castle
The Village Inn
The Lion

Best Midlands New Gay Venue/ Refurbishment
Winner The Loft
Runner-up Missing
Other finalists
Club Chic
The Lion
Sequin Showstoppers

Best Midlands Live Entertainment Venue
Winner The Village Inn
Runner-up Eden
Other Finalists
Dover Castle
The Nightingale
The White Hart

Best Midlands One-Nighter
Winner XXL @ The Core
Runner-up Birmingham Fetish Men at Eden
Other finalists
Block Party at Gorgeous
So It Goes at Nightingale
Breakfast Club at Chic

Best Midlands Pride Event
Winner
Birmingham Pride
Runner-up
Leicester Pride
Other finalists
Coventry Pride
Stoke-on Trent Pride
Walsall Pride

Best Midlands LGBT Event
Winner
Picnic in the Park
Runner-up L Fest
Other finalists
Pride in Sport
Shropshire Rainbow Film Festival
SHOUT Festival

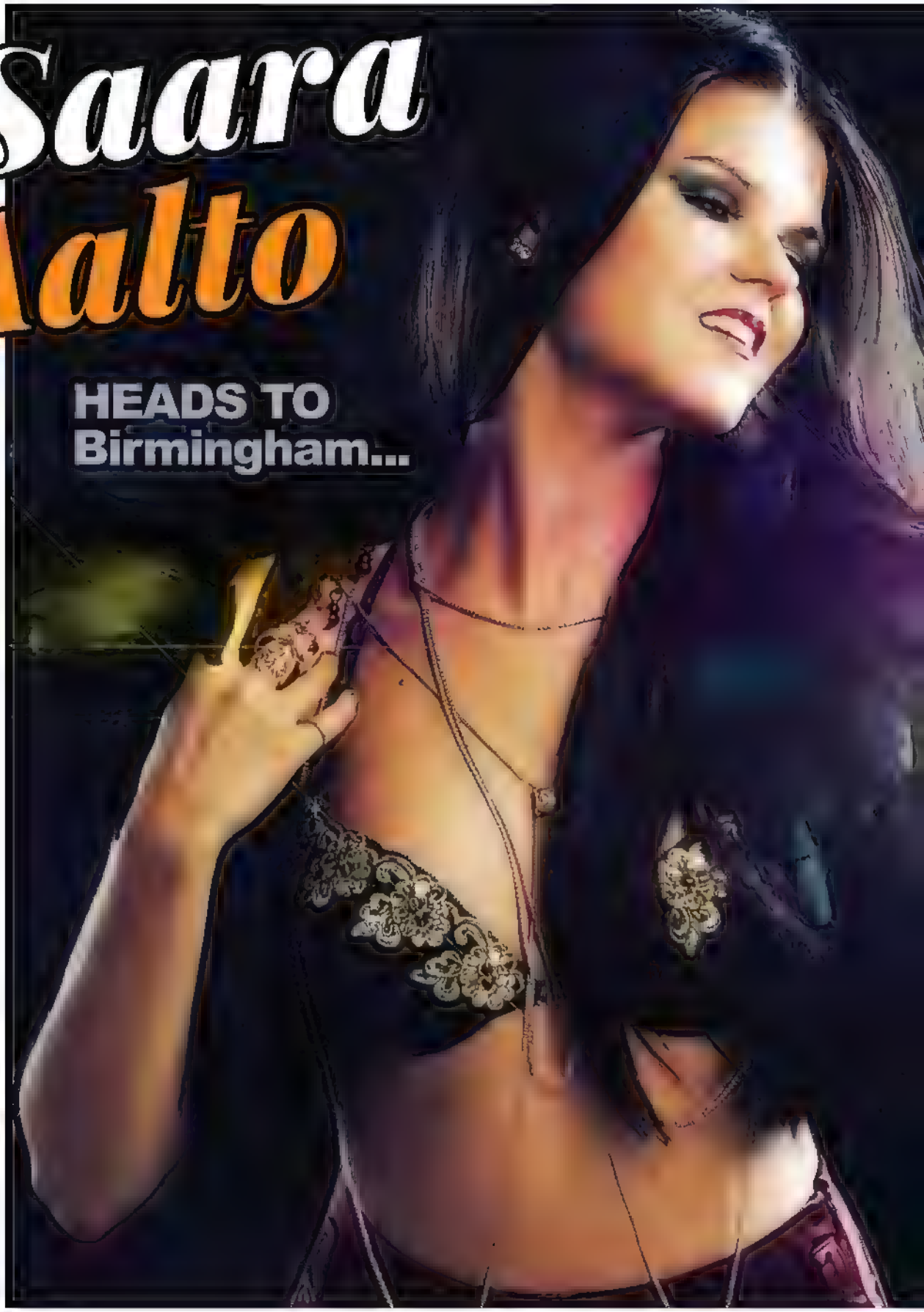
Best Midlands LGBT Charity/Group of Achievement
Winner
Birmingham LGBT
Runner-up Terrence Higgins Trust
Other finalists
Educate & Celebrate
LGBT Network W'ton
Trade Sexual Health

Best Midlands Sport or Social Group
Winner BGSO
Runner-up Acting Out
Other finalists
Birmingham Blaze FC
Birmingham Swifts
Leicester Wildecats

Best Midlands Sauna/Health Club
Winner:
Greenhouse - Darlaston
Runner-up:
CS2 - Nottingham
Other finalists
Splash Leicester
Spartan Birmingham
Unit 2 Birmingham

Best Midlands LGBT-friendly Retail Store
Winner Clonezone
Runner-up Selfridges
Other finalists
John Lewis
Sequin Showstoppers
DSU Underwear

Saara Aalto



"I haven't been to a Pride festival outside Finland. My girlfriend says we have to travel to see other Prides. I'm just so happy and lucky this year to be coming to Birmingham Pride"

Saara Aalto is headlining Birmingham Pride next month. We caught up with her on the X Factor Live touring show...

When did you first realise singing was what you wanted to do, Saara?

Well, I grew up in a musical family; I always sang and my parents sang. It was so natural to me, so I don't even remember deciding singing was going to be my profession. I just always did it - it was my favourite hobby It was so natural

Who are your inspirations and influences?

Because I've always studied music and have always wanted to learn so much, my taste in music is really wide

I love listening to and singing classical music, musical theatre, pop, RnB and different things, so my inspirations come from very different genres

My inspiration when I went to singing lessons was Charlotte Church, and she used to sing classical music when she was young.

I was the same age as her, and I wanted to know how a young girl like her could sing so well. I really wanted to learn to sing like that. So I took classical lessons, and she was my inspiration for that. And I always loved Destiny's Child and Spice Girls. The Spice Girls were my first inspiration to write music in English, when I was 10 years old and couldn't even really speak English.

Then there were female singers like Celine Dion and Whitney Houston - and I really loved the Irish band, The Corrs I have so many inspirations.

You took part in The X Factor last year - what made you want to audition?

Because since I saw the Spice Girls when I was 10, I always wanted to be an international singer. I wanted to perform on big stages, I wanted to sing in English and I wanted to get out of Finland.

I tried to get onto Eurovision twice, in 2011 and 2016. I came second both times. I thought Eurovision would be the only way to get out of Finland.

Then, when I came second last year, my fiancee asked if I'd ever considered going on The X Factor.

I didn't think it was even possible. She'd been watching the show for years and told me that every year there were some international singers

I decided this was my last chance and that I had to try it.

You reached the final, eventually coming second. Did you ever imagine you'd get so far?

No, definitely not. I just took a risk to see how far I could go and what kind of contacts I would make. Every week I thought I would be going home. And then every single week, I kept staying. It was just crazy

People started voting for me and it was just a great journey. I never ever thought I would make it that far

How was Sharon Osborne as your mentor?

I was scared of her at first. She dropped me at the six chair challenge, but then I was brought back. I was quite scared because I was in Sharon's team and she was the one who'd dropped me in the first place

But then, when we started working together in the live shows, she was really nice and sweet and really honest. She would tell me if she didn't like my performances, or if there was something she wanted me to do differently or to change, so I was happy because her opinion was always right. So yeah, I really liked her

> "...and that's why my girlfriend wants to come out with me in public too. She didn't want to be famous or known, and then she realised that we can actually help"

Who did you get on best with during your time on the show?

I would say Kieran from 5 After Midnight, even though we come from totally different backgrounds. Somehow we just connected; it was easy for us to be with each other and talk deeply.

How did The X Factor compare to your time on Finland's version of The Voice, where you also came second?

I also did Finland's Got Talent in 2007 and I came second there as well! I must hold a world record for coming second in talent shows!

The Voice is just about singing, it's not about big productions and dancing. The shows in Finland are much smaller, there's no big money. I felt like I'd never been able to show my versatility on the show, so when I came to The X Factor, I was so happy because they created very big productions for me.

When they realised that I can learn my routines very quickly, they started to give me really challenging performances where I would be lifted up or the dancers would spin me around. I'd never done these crazy things before, but it all worked very well and I enjoyed all of the challenges, so I definitely prefer the X Factor competition.

Stars such as Adam Lambert and Clean Bandit have hinted that they'd like to work with you. Are there any dream collaborations out there that you'd like to make happen?

Of course, yes. I sang with Lambert in the final, and I would really like to sing with him again; maybe a record, maybe a song.

Also Sia and Lady Gaga - all of the big artists who're really different and have their own style. Hopefully in the future...

As a result of your success on the show, you've landed yourself a major record deal with Sony Music. How did you feel when you heard the news?

It was like a new start. In Finland, I was never signed, because I wanted to sing in English - in Finland, you have to sing in Finnish if you want to be signed.

I established my own label about six years ago, so I've always made my music on my own. Now I suddenly have a big team around me and a big label. It's very new for me and very exciting.

When I was on my own, I didn't have the resources or the energy to take care of everything, but now I have support from a big label. I'm very open-minded, so I'll go with the flow and see what happens

What can we expect from your first album since The X Factor, and when can we get our hands on it?

Well, I was writing the whole of January and the beginning of February. Now that I'm on tour with The X Factor Live show, I can't really make music that well, but I'm finding songs and writing songs, and hopefully the album will come out later this year.

It will be a mix of pop and ballad. I love to sing the big emotional ballads, but I'm a showgirl too, so I want to have a mix of both.

Are you looking forward to working with Sia?

A song of Sia's was sent to me, but I won't actually be working with her. Hopefully I will in the future, but for now I'll record her song to see how it fits my voice and whether I want to add it to my album.

You were the voice of Princess Anna in the Finnish version of Frozen. It must have been a great honour being asked to voice a character in such a world-famous movie...

I've wanted to be a Disney princess since I was a child because I just love Disney movies. I always dreamed that maybe one day I could use my voice as a Disney princess.

So when they asked me to take the role, it was like the best job ever! I loved it, and I think my personality fitted Princess Anna so well. It was just like being myself. It was so much fun and I loved all the songs.

It gave me so much joy. And now, if I have a bad day, I remember that I'm a Disney princess and that nobody can take that away from me!

Away from music, you recently got engaged to your girlfriend, Meri. You've had to delay your wedding plans. Is your work keeping you too busy for marriage?

We had a plan to get married next year. I've never had to plan a wedding before, but I've heard that it takes a lot of time and effort, so I'm not sure if we'll be able to do it next year. I hope so

I think this next six months will show how busy I am and if we're able to get married next year.

You came out a couple of years ago. Do you hope to serve as a role model for younger LGBT people who may be struggling to come to terms with their sexuality?

I definitely hope so, and that's why my girlfriend wants to come out with me in public too. She didn't want to be famous or known, and then she realised that we can actually help.

We have to help people, because there aren't so many female couples in public. I think it's really important for us to help both young and older people. I get so many messages from older people saying that because of our story they now have the courage to be who they are.

Sometimes I get negative comments as well, but I'm strong enough to take all the negatives

You'll be performing at Birmingham Pride this year - are you looking forward to it?

Of course! I'm so happy to be doing all these things, and I've never been to Birmingham. It's very exciting for me, as I've just moved to London and I haven't really seen the other cities that much.

Also, I haven't been to a Pride festival outside Finland. My girlfriend says we have to travel to see other Prides I'm just so happy and lucky this year to be coming to Birmingham.

Do you think Pride events are still important, even in 2017?

Yes, definitely Of course, I've only been to Finland Pride I think that for Finnish people it's really important.

Finnish people are open minded but also shy and restricted. I just love the energy and atmosphere at Pride, when people are just so colourful, happy and noisy. I think the world needs that.

The world really needs love because so many bad things are happening Pride is a celebration of love. We should have Pride every day!

You're obviously going to be busy recording your new album, but what else have you got planned for the rest of the year? When can we expect a tour?

Well, I'm very driven and I definitely want to organise a tour as soon as possi ble after this X Factor Live tour. I have my own arena concert in Helsinki, which is going to be great as there are 13,000 people coming to see me

It's a lot of pressure to have my own arena concert, but after I do that, I can maybe have more of these big concerts - and hopefully in Britain as well.

Saara Aalto will be performing live at Birmingham Pride on Saturday 27 May and meeting VIP ticketholders afterwards.

What's On

Mon 3 - Sun 9 April

Ru Paul Drag Race Star Charlie Hides live in Brum

Get along to Eden Bar in Birmingham to see Charlie Hides - the UK star of the current series of Ru Paul's Drag Race.

Saturday 8 April
Eden, Birmingham

Amerie heads to the Nightingale

Pop sensation Amerie heads to Birmingham gay superclub The Nightingale for an exclusive live PA this month. The R'n'B songstress shot to fame in the Noughties with a smattering of hit singles, the most memorable of which was 1 Thing. Expect her Nightingale performance of the track to send the crowd into a wild frenzy.

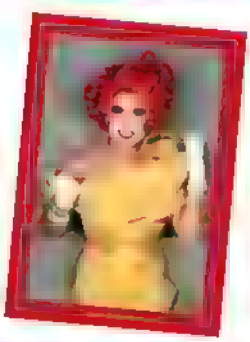
Saturday 8 April
The Nightingale, Birmingham

The Drag With No Name in Shrewsbury

The hilarious crowd surfing, tall wig wearing drag queen from Brighton heads to Shropshire venue C:21 for a night of cabaret. With her hysterical reimaginations of hit songs and clever sketches based on popular culture, she'll have you laughing the night away.

Monday 5 April, C:21, Shrewsbury

La Voix back in Brum



Britain's Got Talent's La Voix - who was last year voted Best National Cabaret Act in the Midlands Zone Readers' Awards returns to Eden for another entertaining evening!

Thursday 6 April
Eden, Birmingham

08 04 17

AMERIIE

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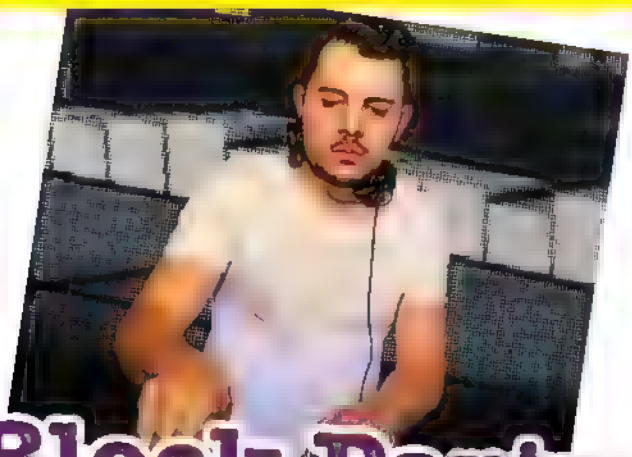
What's On

Mon 10 - Sun 16 April

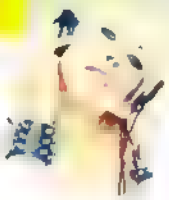


Block Party
ft Billy Da Kid!

Wolverhampton's biggest multi-venue clubbing brand, Block Party, returns to city-centre gay venue Gorgeous on Easter Thursday.
The weekly event hosts an exclusive DJ set from Kiss FM's Billy Da Kid, with support from Block Party resident James Ball. With the party running until the red-eye-inducing time of 6am, you'll have plenty of opportunity to sleep off your hangover, what with it being Good Friday the very next day.

Thursday 13 April, Gorgeous, Wolverhampton

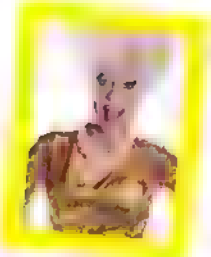
Love PINK?



No, not the bloody colour, silly - the fab-u-lous female recording star! Well, if you do love her, there's no better Pink tribute than the outstanding Vicky Jackson! We'll see you there!

Fri 14 April, Village Inn, Birmingham

Rose Garden
in Northampton



The Boston is holding an Easter Sunday Bank Holiday Party Night on 16 April, featuring some great 'happy hour' drinks and cabaret from the one and only Rose Garden.

Sunday 16 April
The Boston, Northampton

Charity Drag Night

Easter Bank Holiday Sunday sees a gaggle of drag queens take to the stage to raise money for LGBT homelessness charity SIFA Fireside
The night's line-up includes Miss Penny, Myra Dubois, Sum Ting Wong and Charlotte the Harlotte. A night sure to have you in fits of laughter, make sure you have lots of fun, party the night away - and most importantly of all, throw a couple of quid into the collection buckets.

Sun 16 April, The Village Inn, Birmingham

Ruby Murry
Drag Idol heat!

Get along to see Britain's Got Talent's Ruby Murry, and also enjoy the first Birmingham heat of Drag Idol 2017.

Thursday 13 April, Eden, Birmingham

Easter Eggstravaganza

As well as indulging in a shed load of chocolate, Easter Sunday is a great time to party the night away. And where better to do so than the party-loving Missing Bar, which is once again holding its annual Easter Eggstravaganza. The event is hosted by award-winning cabaret artists Laqueefa and features special guests Ebony Kruger and Annie Rexie. Oh, and chocolate lovers are in for a real treat too, as there's also a big Easter egg give-away!

Sun 16 April, Missing Bar, Birmingham

April Entertainment

eden

Sat 1st — **Danny Beard** — Bulls Deep Part II

Thurs 6th — **La Voix** — Britain's Got Talent Semi-Finalist, Great Vocals & Comedy

Fri 7th — In The Bar: **Fanny Burns** — In The Marquee: tickets only **Deviant UK** — Electro Synth Pop — /deviantuk/

Sat 8th — **Charlie Hides** — RuPaul Drag Race

Thurs 13th — **Ruby Murry** — With the 1st heat of Drag Idol 2017. Apply: dragidoluk.co.uk

Fri 14th — **Fame Faith & Controversy** — A Six Hour Club Night & DJ Set With [illegible] Celebrating All The Legends We Lost Last Year. Pay On The Door Only. All Proceeds Will Be Donated To Childline.

Sat 15th — **La Voix** — Britain's Got Talent Semi-Finalist, Great Vocals & Comedy

Thurs 20th — **Danny Beard** — With the 2nd heat of Drag Idol 2017. Apply: dragidoluk.co.uk

Fri 21st — **MidsBears** — Monthly Meet-Up Bears, Cubs, Otters, and their admirers

Sat 22nd — **Brenda LaBeau** — Drag Idol Finalist, Great Vocals & Comedy

Sat 29th — **Mary Mac** — The Cock O' The North Drag Artiste, Great Vocals & Comedy

Sun 30th — **Ruby Murry** — Britain's Got Talent Contestant, Great Vocals & Comedy

Every Fri — DJ Nikki — Karaoke & Disco

Every Sat — DJ Dan — Charts & 80's from 2am

Every Sun — DJ Nikki — Karaoke & Disco

116 Sherlock St Birmingham B5 6NB | End of Hurst Street | 0121 622 1953 | www.TheEdenBar.co.uk

What's On

Mon 17 - Sun 23 April

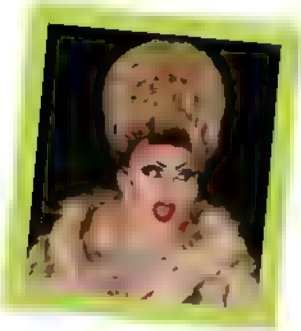
XXL plenty of Boys, Boys, Boys!

The Midlands' biggest and boldest men-only club night takes place at intimate gay venue The Core on the third Friday of each month.

With Ministry of Sound DJ Paul Morrell providing the soundtrack to the night, the award winning event sees hundreds of men - from bears to cubs and everything in between - partying the night away

If you're looking for something a bit more adventurous, then pop upstairs and explore XXL's mysterious dark room for some XXX activity.

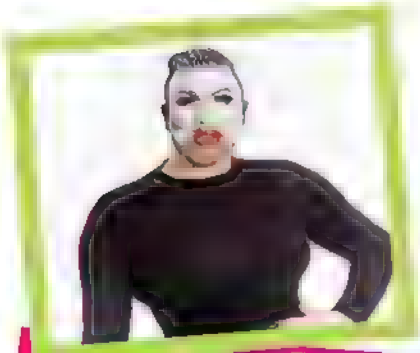
Friday 21 April - The Core, Birmingham



Brenda LaBeau in Brum

This month sees Drag Idol finalist Brenda LaBeau perform some great vocals and comedy in Birmingham

Saturday 22 April, Eden, Birmingham



Danny Beard PLUS DRAG IDOL HEAT

[illegible] the Reader's Awards [illegible] Danny Beard [illegible] second April appearance at Eden [illegible] appearing there on the [illegible]

[illegible] Drag [illegible]

Thursday 20 April, Eden Bar, Birmingham

The return of DE Experience

Jonathan Hellyer as his popular alter-ego, The DE Experience a tribute to Dame Edna - will be performing his highly acclaimed show at the award-winning Village Inn this month. The evening is headed up by former Gaydar Radio DJ Simon Le Van

Friday 21 April - The Village Inn, Birmingham

APRIL

THE VILLAGE INN

FRIDAY 7TH
TOPSIE REDFERN

FRIDAY 14TH
VICKY JACKSON AS PINK

CHARITY NIGHT - SUNDAY 16TH
MISS PENNY, MYRA DUBOIS, SUM TING WONG, CHARLOTTE THE HARLOTTE

FRIDAY 21ST
THE D.E. EXPERIENCE WITH SIMON LE VANS

FRIDAY 28TH
SANDRA LONDON

BANK HOLIDAY SPECIAL - SUNDAY 30TH
LADY IMELDA

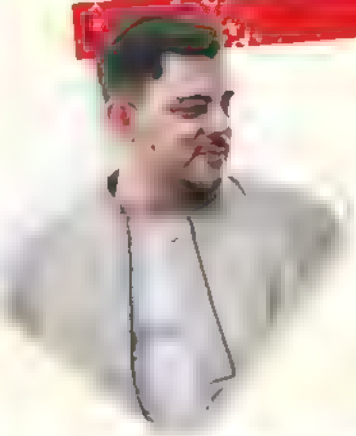
GORGEOUS

PRESENTS

THURS 13 APRIL

10PM-6AM

BLOCK PARTY™



EXCLUSIVE GORGEOUS DJ SET FROM

BILLY DA KID

(KISS FM)

PLUS BLOCK PARTY RESIDENT

JAMES BALL

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

POPWORLD

YATES'S

SUN 30 APR
11PM-6AM

BANK HOLIDAY SPECIAL

TOTALLY GORGEOUS

EXCLUSIVE DJ SET FROM
ROMAN KEMP
(CAPITAL FM)

DJ'S SHAUN BAXTER & DAVEY ECKO

FREE ENTRY B4 MIDNIGHT | DRINKS FROM JUST £1.50 B4 MIDNIGHT

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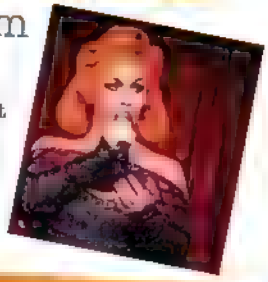
CHALLENGE

What's On

Mon 24 - Sun 30 April

Mary Mac
back in Brum



The Scottish lass is back in Brum for another great show at the city's Eden Bar

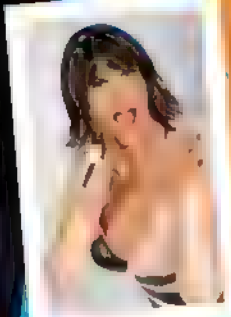
Saturday 29 April
Eden, Birmingham

HORSE MEAT DISCO Street Party!

Birmingham gay superclub The Nightingale is back with another of its infamous street parties at the end of this month. Headlining is happyclapping London DJ collective Horse Meat Disco - stalwarts of disco, funk and soul. They'll be joined by local clubbing brands including Club Fierce, Hooker Club, Prawn, Tektu, S O.U.P, Disco Pussy, Circular Jaw, The Acid Experiment and Holiday - as well as a whole host of local DJs.

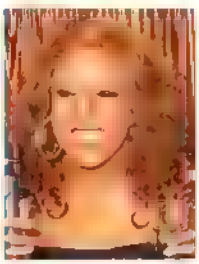
Saturday 29 April - Nightingale Club, Birmingham

Wilma Fingadoo



The hilarious Wilma Fingadoo takes to the stage at Northampton's premiere gay venue for its Bank Holiday Party Night. There are great drink offers to be had, and it's open until 6am!

Sandra & Lady Imelda



It's a great Bank Holiday weekend at The Village - as if the whore of 'Hampstead Heath' Sandra wasn't enough performing her regular last Friday of the month residency - but you can also catch Lady Imelda for a Bank Holiday Special on Sunday 30 April

28 & 30 April - The Village Inn, Birmingham

Roman Kemp
DJ set at Totally Gorgeous

Party the night away at Wolverhampton's award winning gay club on this month's second Bank Holiday Sunday, as Totally Gorgeous brings you an exclusive DJ set from Capital FM's Roman Kemp. There's support from DJs Shaun Baxter and Davey Ecko too

Sunday 30 April
Gorgeous, Wolverhampton

The Vivienne, the UK's ambassador to popular US drag talent show RuPaul's Drag Race, will be helping to relaunch Birmingham gay venue Glamourous, following its expansive refurbishment, on the second Bank Holiday Sunday of the month.

Sunday 30 April - Glamourous, Birmingham

01684 862412
www.malvernhills.gov.uk

The Crescent Theatre
Sheepcote Street, Birmingham B16 8AE
crescent
LARAMIE
PROJECT
27 APRIL
FORBIDDEN NIGHTS
MAIN HOUSE
Box Office: 0121 643 5858
www.crescent-theatre.co.uk

GLAMOROUS
BIRMINGHAM
THE BIG REVEAL
FOLLOWING OUR FULL REFURBISHMENT
30 APRIL
THE VIVIENNE
RUPAUL'S DRAGRACE UK DRAG AMBASSADOR
WWW.GLAMOROUSBIRMINGHAM.CO.UK
YOUR WEEKLY ENTERTAINMENT
MONDAY
MICHAEL EMERY 4 - 6AM
TUESDAY
PAM CATZ 11 - 6AM
WEDNESDAY
MICHAEL EMERY 11 - 6AM
THURSDAY
AMANDA CRUZ 11 - 6AM
FRIDAY
MICHAEL EMERY 4 - 6AM
SATURDAY
PAM CATZ 11 - 6AM
SUNDAY
GAVINA VAGINA 11 - 6AM

What's On

Arts • Theatre • Entertainment

Mamma Mia!

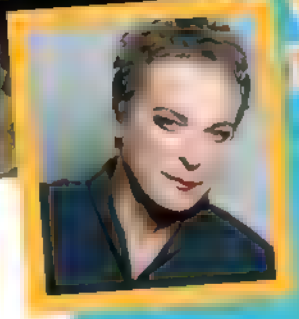
Whilst it may not have the hot and hunky Dominic Cooper from the film version, this legendary stage musical still contains Abba campness by the bucketload, not to mention singalong hits including Waterloo, Dancing Queen and Take A Chance On Me.

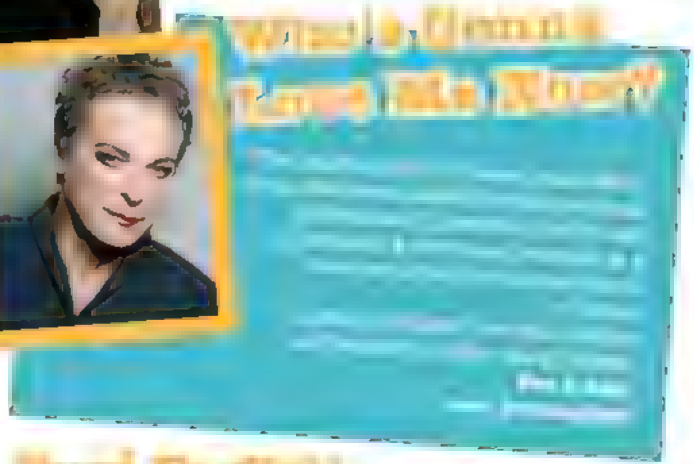
Tues 18 - Sat 29 April 2017
Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent
Tues 6 - Sat 24 February 2018
Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton

Billy Elliot: The Musical

"Moving, funny and downright brilliant!'
To read our full review of this highly acclaimed UK touring production, visit midlandszone.co.uk

Until Sat 29 April
Birmingham Hippodrome





Craig David

Best known for hits such as 7 Days, I'm Walking Away and Re-Rewind with Artful Dodger, Craig David has sold over 15 million albums, achieved 16 top-ten hits and reached multi platinum status in more than 20 countries. See him in Coventry as part of his Following My Intuition arena tour, his biggest in the UK for 15 years.

Saturday 8 April - Ricoh Arena, Coventry

Suzi Ruffell

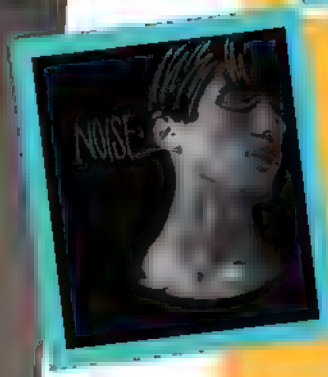
Gay, quirky and delightfully self deprecating, Suzi Ruffell is making good progress in the challenging world of stand up comedy. Presenting an unquestionably likeable persona, she imbues her act with an impressive dynamism - although critics point out that she'd probably benefit from developing a 'unique selling point'.

Fri 7 & Sat 8 April
The Comedy Loft, Birmingham
Thurs 13 - Sat 15 April
The Glee Club, Birmingham

Ed Sheeran

It's been impossible to avoid Ed Sheeran and his new album, ÷, over the past month, especially as all 16 of its tracks entered the Official Singles Chart Top 20. The talented singer-songwriter heads to Birmingham this month to perform two 'sold out' shows.

Fri 28 & Sat 29 April - Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham



Noise

Forbidden Nights

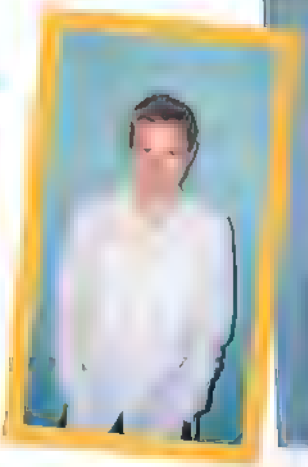
Described as Cirque du Soleil meets Magic Mike, this new all-male variety show features 'explosive' choreography, a vocalist, aerial artist, pole performer and fire act.

Thurs 27 April
Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

Birmingham Literary Festival

This new springtime edition celebrates BLF's 20th anniversary and features appearances by bestselling novelist Lionel Shriver and outspoken Birmingham MP Jess Phillips Others making a welcome contribution to the event are nature writer Alys Fowler, the beetle-loving MG Leonard, debut author Olivia Sudjic and local writer Luke Kennard.

Fri 21 - Sat 23 April
Various locations



Rose & Rosie

birminghamlgbt.org.uk/ageing-better

Ageing Better Together

50+ can connect with each other

Attend, Organise & Connect

Ageing Better in Birmingham can support people of all ages to set up new groups and activities which will be attractive to people who are 50 and over. If you've got a hobby or interest to share, a good idea to develop, or simply if you want to get out and socialise more, Ageing Better can help.

You Can Join In

to hear from you

Set Up

The LGBT Hub can also help you set up your own Ageing Better Network and run your own group or activities. If you are already in a group, it can become an Ageing Better Network and get supported to try to reach new people

AGEING BETTER IN BIRMINGHAM

For an informal chat, please contact us. Maria Hughes, Network Enabler, Ageing Better LGBT Hub mariahughes@blgbt org or call 0121 643 0821

Birmingham LGBT

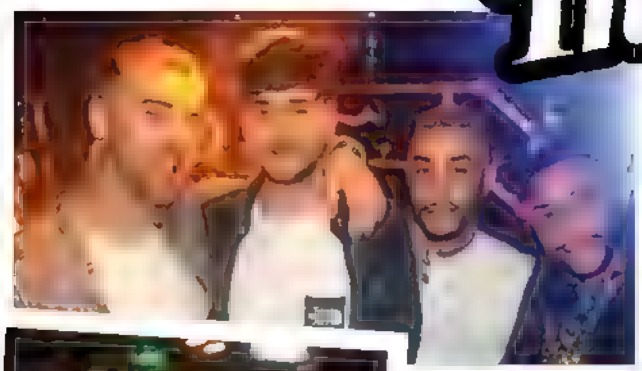
bvsc the centre for voluntary action

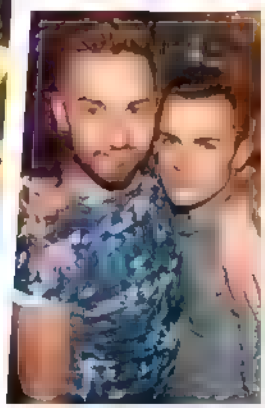
LOTTERY FUNDED

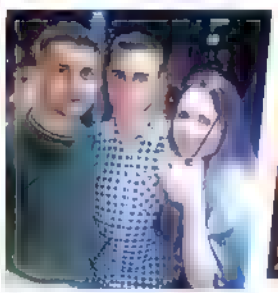
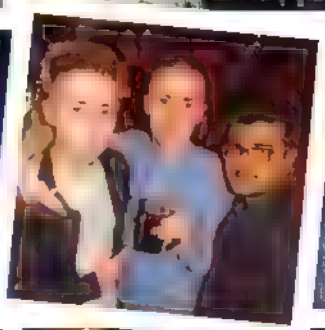
It's bostin' at The Boston

Looking for a great vibrant atmosphere? Perhaps you should head to The Boston in Northampton for your next night out!

Bargain drinks, cheap entry and great entertainment and music all shape the venue up to be a great night out! If you haven't been yet, swing by and party on!





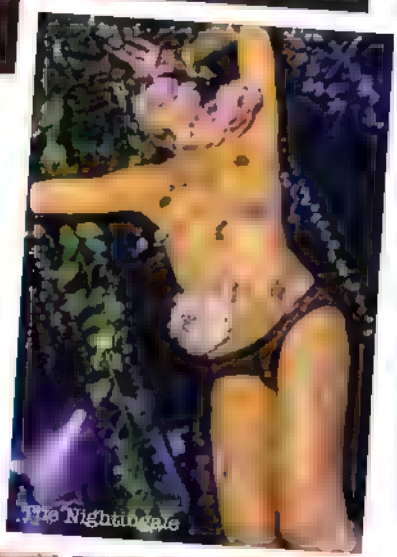



Kevin Simm and Mary Mac celebrate Eden's 9th birthday

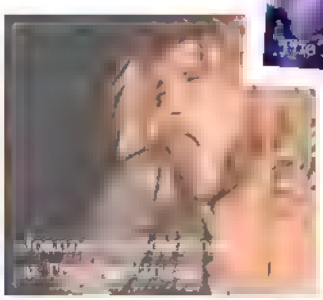
Party all night in vibrant Birmingham

If you're out for the night in Birmingham, then the city's gay scene is a great place to be!

With over 15 bars and clubs to choose from, there really is something for everyone! It's a truly great night out!


The Nightingale

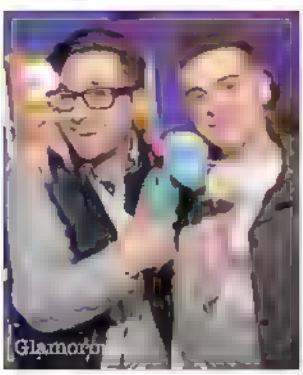
The Loft

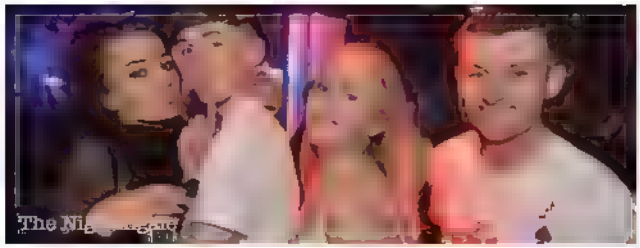


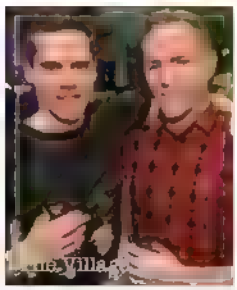
The Village

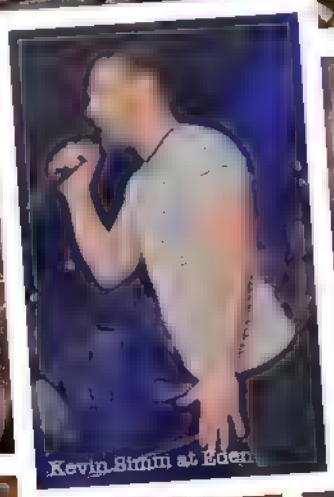
The Nightingale

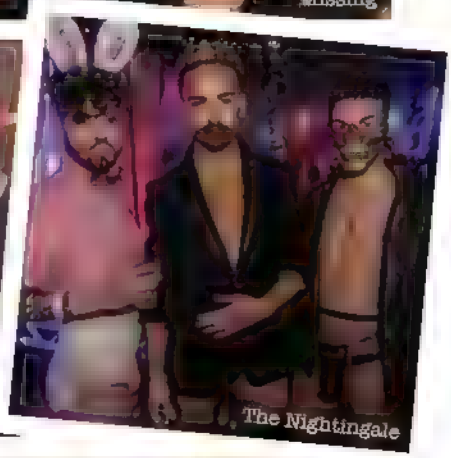
The Loft

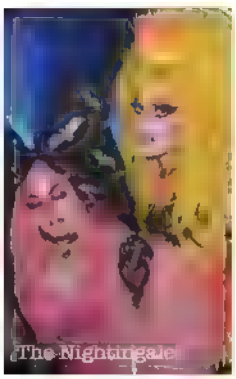

Glamorous

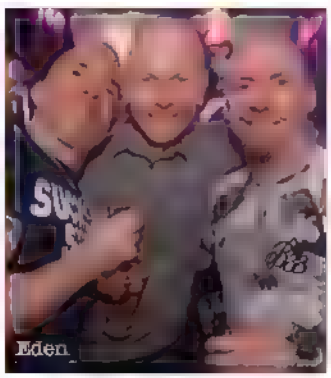






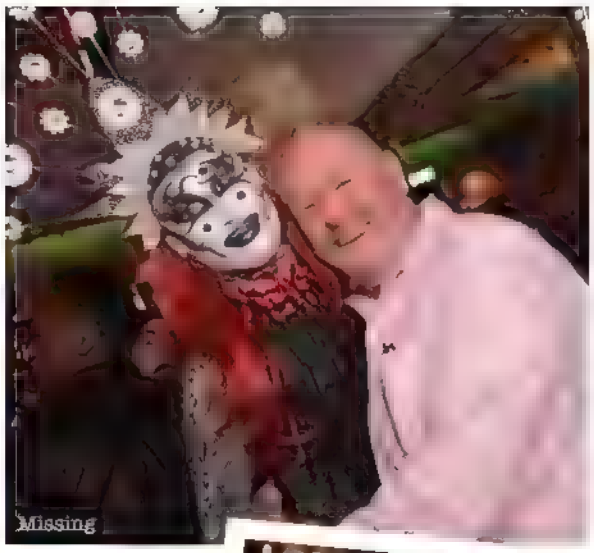


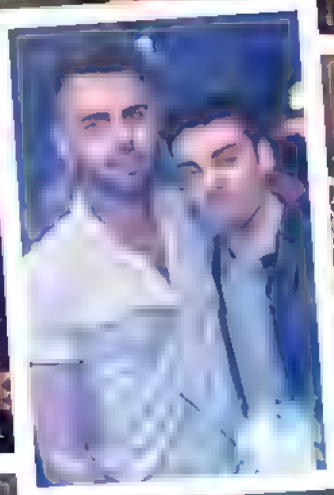


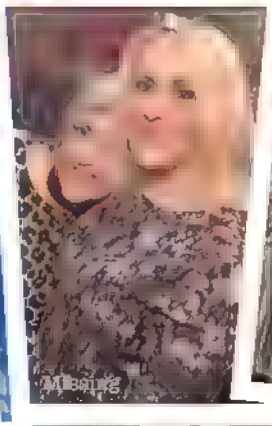


Pictures by JakeeeM Photography

Party all night in vibrant Birmingham

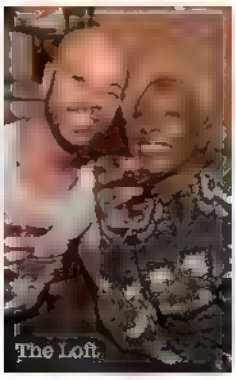


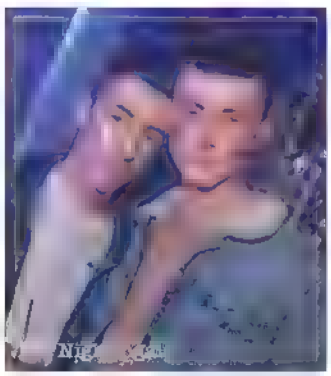




The Loft

Eden


The Loft



Glamorous

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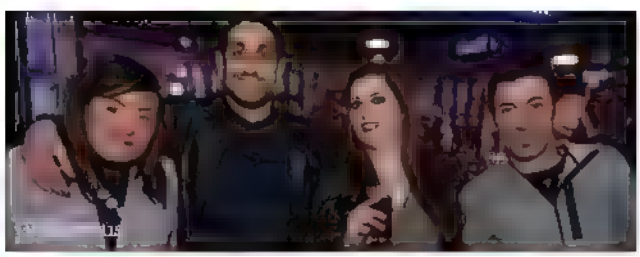
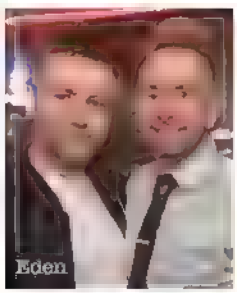
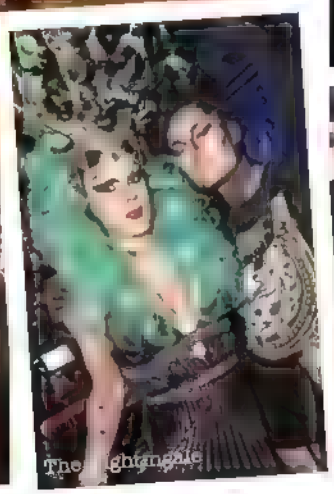



Eden

The Loft



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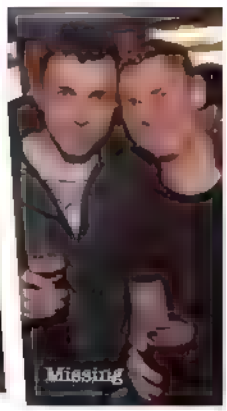
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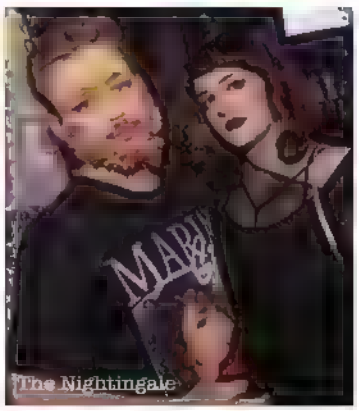
The Nightingale

Birmingham LGBT

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Sexual Health Services for LGBT People

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Our free and confidential services include

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- Free Rapid HIV testing (results in 60 seconds)
- Free condoms, lube, dams and gloves
- One to one support with friendly and professional LGBT staff
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- Clinic Trans – Trans people's sexual health clinic every – monthly every 4th Friday
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- Support around sexual and domestic abuse
- Referral to counselling and peer support

Opening hours

Mon: 8am–8pm
Tues, Wed, Thu: 9am–9pm
Fri: 8am–8pm
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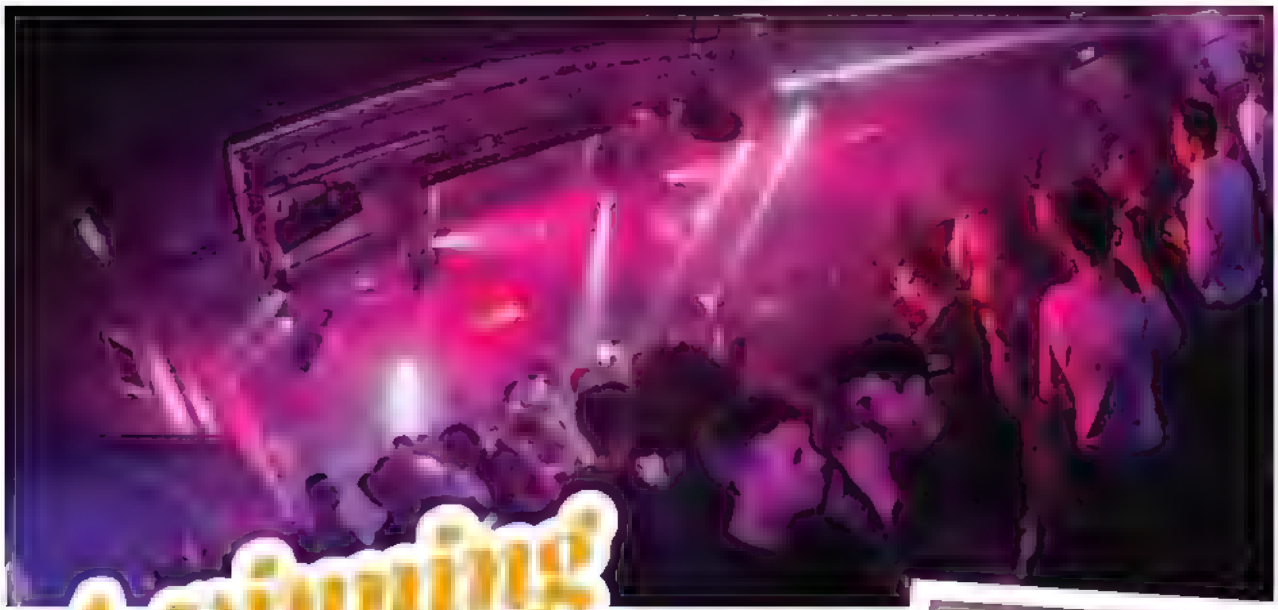
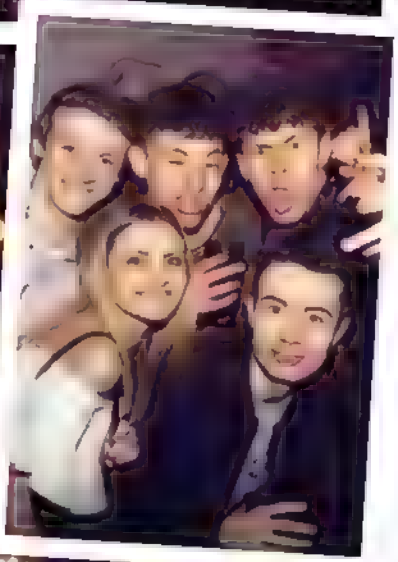
Contact the Sexual Health Team at the Birmingham LGBT Centre

- birminghamlgbt.org.uk
- sexualhealth@blgbt.org
- 0121 643 0821
- umbrellahealth.co.uk
- 0121 237 5700
- umbrellaatbirminghamlgbt

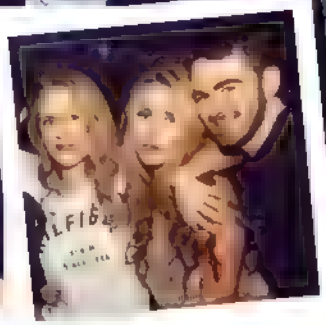


A winning night out at Gorgeous



It's one of the most popular venues in Wolverhampton, and that's why it won a handful of awards in our Readers' Awards!

Gorgeous has some great events coming up this month, including Capital FM DJ, Roman Kemp on Sunday the 30th!



Pictures by JakeeeM Photography

munch

Food and drink news from across the Midlands...

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To celebrate National Paella Day, which took place at the end of March, award winning restaurant El Borracho De Oro has set up a Little Borracho pop-up stand at 1000 Trades on Frederick Street in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter (from 3 - 29 April). Open Monday to Saturday, the stand serves a range of authentic Spanish food, including croquetas de jamón, chicken and chorizo paella and that old favourite, potatas bravas
So why not head on down there asap to enjoy some terrific and tastebud titillating tapas - it'll make for a splendid and much-needed change from scoffing all those Easter eggs!

[illegible]

[illegible]

A monthly 'food tour' has been launched in Birmingham.
Described as 'a relaxed, guided walk with gastronomical flavour', the tour provides participants with the chance to sample offerings from the city's local independent restaurants, cafes and street food providers.
Commenting on the new initiative, its founder and host, Rhiannon Simpson, said: "The tour is like a lazy, grazing lunch with sites, facts and fun along the way. My aim is to engage guests, share stories about this fantastic city and promote the best local, independent food businesses."
The food tour's up-and-coming dates are Saturday 8 April and Saturday 6 May. Both tours take place in the city centre from midday to 4pm.

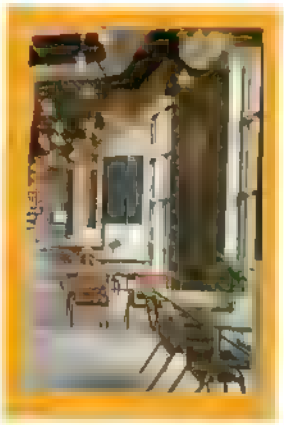
New Birmingham city centre rooftop restaurant revealed

The UK's biggest touring gin festival is this summer stopping off in Stoke-on Trent for the first time. Gin Festival Stoke, taking place at Victoria Hall in Hanley on Friday 23 and Saturday 24 June, will offer visitors the opportunity to sample over 100 different varieties of gin, learn about the history of 'Britain's favourite spirit', meet industry experts and enjoy live music.

"We absolutely love gin," says Jym Harris, who founded the festival with wife Marie, "so we started these events because we thought other people would want the same as us. We've been overwhelmed by the positive reception, and it's been fantastic to see so many people rediscover this amazing drink." For more information, visit ginfestival.com

All-vegan eatery now open for business in Brum

A new all vegan eatery has opened in Birmingham. Natural Healthy Foods' new café on Suffolk Street, Queensway, offers visitors a selection of gluten free, hot and raw food and organic vegan options. The new venue seats 54 people and stocks more than 1,500 products



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TOP 20

For many, the word 'fetish' conjures up images of guys dressed in leather, rubber or sportswear - but there are plenty of other fetishes out there too. Here are the 20 most common ones. Which one is yours?...

LEATHER

It's not just belts and shoes that guys love leather for. No leather trousers, shirts, jackets, hats and gloves can also be real turn-ons. Although the gear can be quite expensive, it's certainly the most popular fetish out there.

Used underwear

Yes, believe it or not, there are people out there who adore used underwear. A quick search on Twitter reveals a lot of people selling used and soiled undies!

Watersports

This fetish is like Marmite - you either love it or hate it. Some guys just love being pissed on and used like a toilet. In some sex clubs, you'll even find a bath for watersports lovers to lie down in!

Food

We all love food, and some of us can't get enough of it. But then there are the people who love involving food in their sex lives. Whipped cream and chocolate, anyone?

Role play

'Acting' in the bedroom also ranks up there as one of the most common fetishes. Among the most popular role plays are 'daddy and son' and 'master and slave'

Armpits

Whilst the thought of sweaty armpits doesn't appeal to many, some guys just love sticking their face in one whilst doing the deed.

Bondage

Another extremely common fetish is bondage. You'd be surprised how many people actually enjoy being tied up and taken advantage of. And the odd bit of spanking is often thrown in for good measure too - whether by hand or with a paddle!

Uniforms

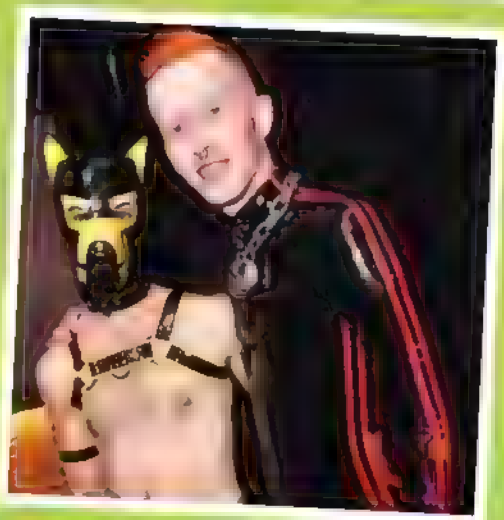
Soldier, sailor, policeman or fireman - which one turns you on? People love a man in uniform - and also love to dress up in uniforms. We're not too sure that your average supermarket outfit has all that much potential to arouse, mind!

RUBBER

Rubber is another hugely popular fetish. Guys love being clad in the skin-tight stuff. Whether it's just a pair of shorts and t-shirt or a top-to-toe suit, rubber leaves very little to the imagination.

PUP PLAY

Some guys get a big thrill out of pup play - acting like, or being the owner of, a puppy. They will often dress up as one, using a leather or rubber pup mask, a harness, collars and leads



FETISHES

Wearing nappies

Adults wearing nappies for sexual thrills is more popular than you'd maybe imagine. Some wear them and pretend to be a baby; others enjoy the thrill of wearing them under their day-to-day clothes

Cross Dressing

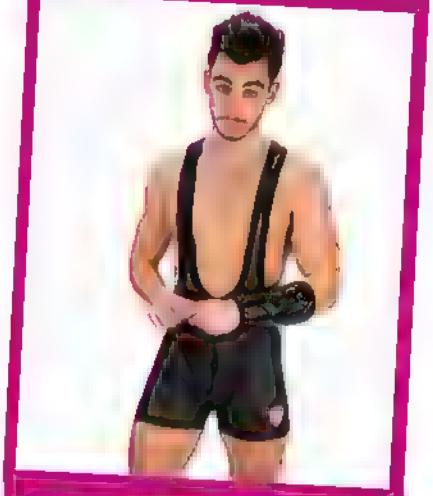
Cross dressing isn't really the same thing as drag, but some blokes get a real kick out of wearing women's clothes whilst in the bedroom. Whether it's lingerie or a full outfit, it's more popular than you may think.

Voyeurism

Loads of men get a kick out of watching others get their rocks off. Whether it's a couple of strangers or their partner with someone else, being hands-off during sex is quite a big thrill for some.

Domination & Submission

You could say that domination and submission is a cross between role play and bondage. The dominant figure orders the submissive to do things, or acts assertively in the bedroom, using objects to cause a bit of kinky pain.



SPORTS GEAR

Football, rugby, wrestling - three of the most popular fetish-inspiring sports. Footy socks, nylon shorts or Lycra wrestling suit are all essentials for this much-loved option

FEET

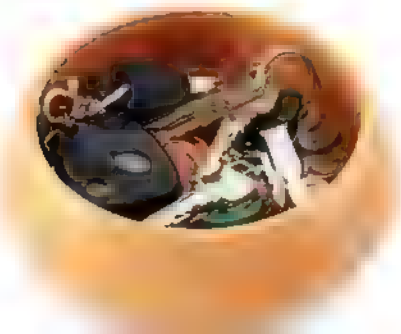
We spend all day on them, they get smelly and sweaty, but a large percentage of guys just can't get enough of them. Licking, sucking and rubbing stinky feet is certainly not uncommon, but not ideal for anyone who's ticklish!

CBT

CBT stands for 'cock and ball torture'. This one's a bit rough and might make you squirm, but some men really enjoy having pain inflicted on their meat and two veg!

Swinging

There's a certain thrill for some men in having multiple sexual partners at an event, with their own partner involved too. Pop your keys in a bowl and see who you draw the next time you're at a house party!



Exhibitionism

Some guys just love to do the deed outside. Whether it's in the woods, on a car park or in a public toilet, the thrill of knowing they might get caught is what excites them the most.

SUITS

Many people find office attire dull and boring, but some gay men get really turned on by it.
Maybe it's the tie that does it - something for them to hold on to!

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WHAT'S YOUR FETISH?

Nick Crombie, aged 28, from Redditch

Founder of Birmingham Fetish Men

"I'm into quite a lot of fetishes, leather, obviously, as you can see - although it's actually the one I came to last.

I started off with a sports kit fetish and skinhead gear

I'm now also into the kink scene, along with rubber, BDSM and bondage."

▲ Gary, aged 26, from Birmingham

Fetish: **Bondage**

NHS
Staffordshire and
Stoke on Trent Partnership
NHS Trust

Whatever you're into...

Remember, free and confidential STI testing is available at Cobridge Community Health Centre

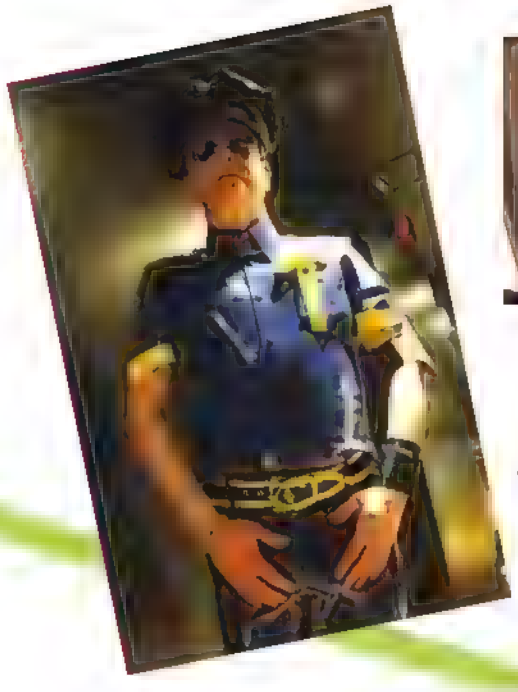
Cobdridge Community Health Centre, Building H, Church Terrace, Cobridge, Stoke-on Trent, ST6 2JN

Gaylife Staffordshire

@GaylifeNStaffs

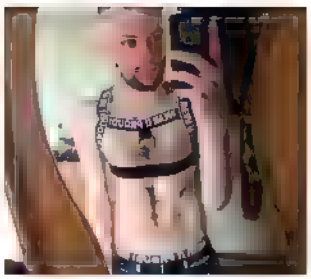
HOW TO STAY HAPPY ATTRACTIVE AND SEXUALLY ACTIVE IN STOKE-ON-TRENT

WHAT'S YOUR FETISH?



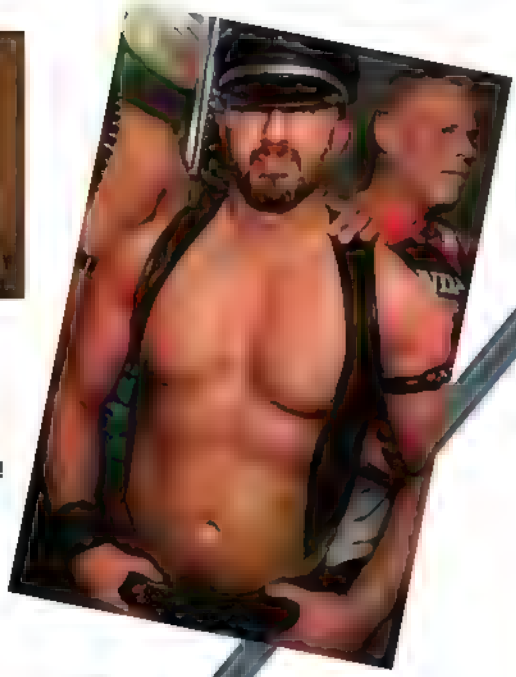
▲ Kevin, aged 50, from Birmingham

Fetish: **Rubber**



▲ Luke from Bromsgrove

Fetish: **Leather, pups underwear and more!**



▲ Cal from Birmingham

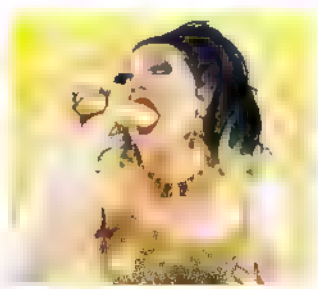
Fetish: **Leather**

CJ, aged 46, from Birmingham

Fetish: **Dom/Sub** ▼

Miss Penny, from Birmingham

Fetish: **Greggs** ▼



Brett from Kettering

Fetish: **Sportswear** ▼

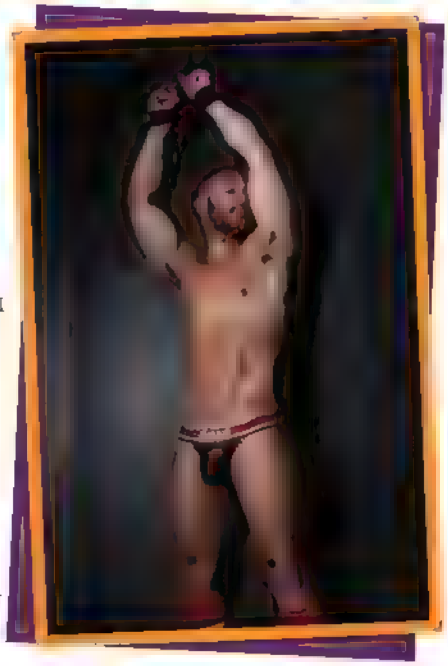
Let's talk about... CONSENT

Ever felt confused, uncomfortable and worried following a sexual experience? Well Birmingham LGBT are here to talk about it...

For any sexual activity to be consensual, a person needs to have freely agreed to participate, without there being any conditions attached.

Sexual consent cannot be given under pressure, coercion, fear of threat, social ostracisation, for reward, to fill a void, to pay off debt, if asleep, drunk or on drugs. Sex under pressure is not consent.

Sexual coercion involves persuading someone to do something or see something sexual that they don't want to, through intimidation, force, threats and/or more subtle emotional pressure or reward. Coercion can be very powerful and can take away a person's ability to choose



Fetish & BDSM

Fetish/BDSM can be highly pleasurable and enjoyable. Consent to fetish/BDSM must be given freely, and all people in a sexual situation must feel able to stop the sexual activity at any point.

Communication is important, to ensure that each person is aware of what is or is not permitted. Negotiate and agree what's okay with all persons involved in the play scene

Ways to keep safe when playing:

- Be sure you trust the people you do fetish/BDSM with, and that you're comfortable about engaging in fetish/BDSM with them.

- Check whether people are using condoms/dental dams and sterile sharps and edge play, personal equipment, especially porous material - eg floggers, ropes, canes, dildos.

- Establish safe words or signals to indicate something is not okay and that you want to stop or pause.

- Make sure non verbal or movement signals to stop are possible - eg establish how you will communicate consent/non-consent once tied up and gagged

Remember that if you consent to one act, it doesn't mean you consent to others. Also, you can withdraw your consent at any time

Power dynamics are often a crucial part of fetish/BDSM play, and so the bound aries/restrictions and limits of power play need to be negotiated and agreed by all involved, with a clear option to stop at any point.

Rape scenes and age play need to be very carefully and clearly negotiated with all parties involved. Free consent is needed for the scene to go ahead.

Don't judge consent on what people are wearing. Just as a mini-skirt isn't an invitation for sex, a bondage outfit doesn't mean consent.

Only people aged 16 (18 for venues) and older are able to consent by law to fetish/BDSM.

Chemsex Parties & Slamming

If you consent to being injected, you may not be able to consent or resist sexual activity afterwards

If someone is 'out of it', they can't consent, so you shouldn't have sex with them.

Consent should be freely/willingly given without any pressure or coercion from either person. Previous sexual activity with someone doesn't mean they consent this time - do not assume consent

Pay attention to others. Sexual activity should be enjoyable for everyone and consented to enthusiastically What does the other person's body language indicate? What does their non-verbal communication say? Passivity or non-response does not mean consent.

Only people aged 16 and older are able to consent by law to sexual activity

There's support...

If you feel you've been coerced, pressured, exploited or forced into sexual activity, please don't hesitate to contact LGBT Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVA) Bev and Mark on 0121 643 0301 option 2, or email isva@rsvporg co.uk

An ISVA can support you emotionally and practically through reporting procedures, the criminal justice system and legal process. They can ensure that your individual views, opinions, wishes and needs are supported, respected, listened to and taken into account by all parties and agencies involved

They can also help by referring you to and helping you access other specialist service providers, such as sexual health services via Umbrella.

You will be treated with respect and understanding. "We believe you, and we believe in you.", Birmingham LGBT

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Available at Clonezone Brimingham or at clonezone.co.uk

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3) Cell Block 13 Xtreme
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4) Cell Block 13
LA Fusion Brief
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5) Cell Block 13
LA Vertigo Sock
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WIN! Get your hands on a bottle of Spunk Lube

In need of another bottle of lube? Well you're in luck! We've teamed up Spunk Lube to give away three bottles of the stuff to three lucky readers!

Spunk Lube Hybrid is a multi-award winning water based silicone lubricant that resembles the look and feel of natural body lubrication. It lets you feel the sensation of skin to skin contact.

Spunk Lube Hybrid is a non staining, hypoallergenic formula that cleans up very easily. It's white, creamy and fun to use. It's not sticky, tacky or greasy and is perfect for anal, vaginal, masturbation, solo, sex, toys, condoms and more. Spunk Lube Hybrid is formulated with the highest quality of ingredients and will leave your skin feeling soft and smooth.

Spunk Lube Hybrid is £9.99 for a 4oz bottle and is available from spunklube.com or clonezone.co.uk.

To enter this competition, all you need to do is visit midlandszone.co.uk and answer this simple question:

What type of lube is Spunk?

A) Silicone
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LIFE OF A THIRTYSOMETHING GAY

"The Big Smoke"

Okay, so living in the countryside can have its perks for sure. Clean air, green fields, birds singing la la songs And everything is, well, just that little bit slower. In a world that's gone crazy, where everything needs to be done yesterday or preferably last week, 'slower' is hugely appealing. You know your neighbours by name, which is kinda quaint, especially when they leave beautiful pot plants on your doorstep because they thought it'd be nice. Out in the sticks, people say 'hello' even if they don't know you.

More remarkably, people reply as they make eye contact and smile back at you. Talking to folks you don't know is clearly the norm away from the big smoke. Countryside living cleanses the soul, refreshes the spirit and makes your heart skip a beat on a warm Eng lish summer's day

Living in Stratford-upon Avon for the last year has been cute. The town has the RSC, stunning walks and shed loads of fit tourists streaming in from all over the globe to soak up Shakespeare. And then there's the plethora of famous actors, living, visiting and surreptitiously hiding from (or more likely courting) the media, hanging out in the town's restaurants and treading the boards at night.

Countryside living has many tweed lined perks - but when this Stepford Wife stopped, finally put down the pot plants and thought long and hard, I realised there was a fundamental flaw in being a single gay guy living out in the sticks. It's all a bit stifling and, rather more pointedly, bereft of my gay brothers and sisters, whose absence makes me feel lost.

Those who *can* be found mingling with the tweed and fulfilling the countryside dream are nine times out of ten happy gay couples. Needless to say, that's not this sister!

Out in the sticks, there aren't any gay bars. There aren't any rainbow flags flying proudly on the wind. In fact, there are none of the usual heralds of gay culture. That eye-catching Tom of Finland artwork remains firmly locked away in the dark recesses of city bars, waiting to tempt naive country boys into the fold.

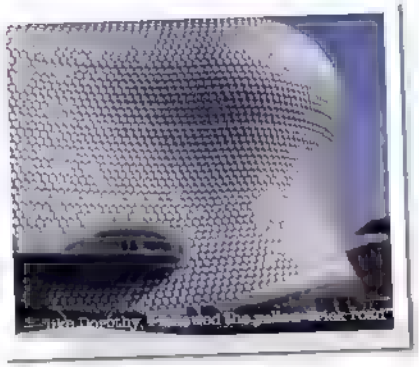
In Warwickshire, the mere suggestion of a gay bar would send the local licence holders out onto the streets with placards, as their 1980s conservatism still runs to the sound of Jerusalem, impressively backed up by lashings of passive-aggressive nuclear-family ideals that are safeguarded at all costs

Being gay in the countryside is like wearing tweed, carrying a shotgun and walking your Springer spaniel down New Street or Colmore Row On the face of it, it can all appear to be a bit ridiculous and alien to those around you.

I watched a few months ago as a gorgeous couple walked nervously down the Stratford high street, tentatively holding hands. What should have been an intimate moment between two guys who clearly loved each other was tainted by their fear of confrontation, of potential slurs and outrageous heckles This was made evident by the way they constantly scanned the horizon, pre-empting trouble and being all too ready to release their grip on one another should such homophobia come screaming their way. It didn't directly, but the harsh and judgmental looks certainly did

In a town where being gay is only really welcome if you keep it behind closed doors with the curtains firmly shut, my heart both skipped a beat at their bravery and sank with sadness that they couldn't just hold hands without it becoming a perceived political gesture for all involved. As I walked home, I had an epiphany

After 10 years away, it was time to head back to the bright lights of the big smoke. It was time to really live again.



As a Brummie born in South Birmingham, I fled the confines of the city in 2000 for the lure of London. I returned four years later, partied out, penniless and desperate for a job. Three years later, I was living in the sticks, only visiting the city when the mood took me.

In the time I've been away, Birmingham has been on the make. Gone are the dank and dark underpasses of the Bull Ring. The sounds of builders, cranes and demolition work ring out as the old is cast aside in favour of the exciting and the new. The city is still rising like a phoenix from the ashes, casting off the legacy of those short-sighted 1960s urban planners. More importantly, it's now looking great. It feels confident.

So like Dorothy, I followed the yellow brick road two weeks ago and it brought me back to Birmingham. Being part of city life again is a breath of fresh air that the countryside can never give you. We inhabit the cities in a way that breeds a certain confidence and con tempt all at the same time. We are free to be our unrestrained selves, flying the flag without need for hiatus. The potential to meet up, hook up or find someone to share part of my life with has increased spectacularly, simply by virtue of the fact that everywhere I turn, I see members of our community
Life is too short to be locked away. Like Rapunzel, it's time to let down my hair.

Things are no doubt about to get messy!

CAT'S CORNER

"Lesbian sells house shock!"

Apparently, a lesbian is selling a house. And this is making headline news in the tabloids. And I'm sharing this news with you because the rest of the news is just too depressing to look at.

Trump has failed to grow any brain cells since his election, despite all our prayers; some maniac has tried to kill London; and Brexit means that Hula Hoops are now so small that you can't put them on your fingers anymore.

Ellen DeGeneres is the lesbian in question (I'm not sure there are any other lesbians in Tabloid World) and she's selling her mansion in Santa Barbara for a mere £38million.

How did she get so wealthy? Didn't she just own a kooky little bookshop?

So the internet is going crazy. They've got all the estate agent photos and are fawning over the gorgeousness and opulence of it all. By contrast, when I wanted to sell my terrace in Erdington, I couldn't even get the estate agent to put a picture of it in their window. Apparently, photographs of it were not conducive to encouraging purchasers. Ellen's house sale, however, is getting more publicity than Trump's hair.

But why are we so interested? The problem is, it's a really nice house. I mean, gorgeous. It's also ridiculously over the top, with 19 fireplaces, a Roman-style swimming pool, its own olive grove, 'multiple libraries' and a sunken tennis court (never mind, love, some underpinning will sort that out for you).

It's worth more than I will ever earn in my lifetime, probably more than my whole family will earn in our collective lifetimes. And she's just getting rid of it. If I got inside that house, I would superglue my hands to the walls so that no one could ever drag me out of it again. But she's just flogging it. And presumably it's not because she can't afford the council tax, or doesn't get on with the nearest neighbours (who are miles away). No, she's just selling it.

If truth be told, all these photographs of her house aren't about selling her house. That's not why we're looking at them. They're just telling us how stinking rich she is. I mean, that house means she must be crazy rich. And it's like looking at a car accident on the motorway. We don't really want to know the sickening details, but we just can't help staring. **Cat Davies**

NHS

MENS HEALTH

LEICESTER

Free, private and confidential sexual health checks to gay & bisexual men, and men who have sex with men (MSM).

celts sauna

Celts Narborough Road Sauna Clinic:
Day: Saturday 29th April
Time: 11am - 1.30pm
Place: 38 Narborough Road, Leicester, LE3 0BQ

City Celts Sauna Clinic:
Day: Mondays | Time: 4pm - 7pm
Day: Wednesdays | Time: 3pm - 6pm
Place: 33 New Bond Street, Leicester LE1 4RQ

Splash Spa & Leisure

Day: Thursdays
Time: 3pm - 6pm
Place: 61 Bedford Street, Leicester LE1 3JR

TRADE

You can also check out Trade Sexual Health.

www.tradesexualhealth.com

Further information available

www.leicestersexualhealth.nhs.uk

ON THE BALL with Steve Ball

"Fake news"

There's lots of talk about 'fake news' at the moment. It's widely credited with winning Trump the US election yet hasn't stopped him from accusing the world's media of making up stories in order to disc

A German newspaper recently admitted reporting a false story about a 'rioting sex mob' of refugees in Frankfurt on New Year's Eve that never actually happened. And Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Facebook, has said that he will work hard to keep fake news off his social media site.

Getting to the truth can be complicated, but I wonder if we all need to be a little more canny in the way we interpret the news stories we read in the press and on social media.

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg

Grindr - that's the gay men's hook-up site, for the uninitiated - has recently announced it's offering users the chance to state their HIV status and the date of their last test on their profile.

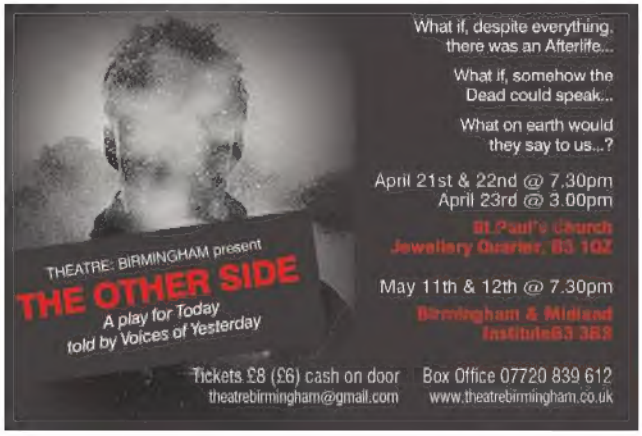
Grindr claims that this new addition will help to create an open dialogue among users, and that for many men, profile screens can make it much easier to raise issues of HIV status. They cite studies which have shown that knowing a partner's status reduces instances of high-risk sex.

So far so good. But not everyone knows their HIV status and not everyone is totally honest about it. For some, believing that a potential sexual partner is HIV negative could increase the chances of having unprotected sex.

Likewise there's the danger that it will further stigmatise men who are open about their HIV-positive status.

Just as we shouldn't believe everything we read in the newspapers, so too we shouldn't believe everything we see on social media.

Let's try to ensure that fake news doesn't make April Fools of us all.


What if, despite everything, there was an Afterlife...
What if, somehow the Dead could speak...
What on earth would they say to us...?
April 21st & 22nd @ 7.30pm
April 23rd @ 3.00pm
St.Paul's Church Jewellery Quarter, B3 1QZ
May 11th & 12th @ 7.30pm
Birmingham & Midland Institute B3 3BS
THEATRE: BIRMINGHAM present
THE OTHER SIDE
A play for Today told by Voices of Yesterday
Tickets £8 (£6) cash on door
theatrebirmingham@gmail.com
Box Office 07720 839 612
www.theatrebirmingham.co.uk

THE VIRAL ROUND-UP

Here's what we've been looking at online...

We all do it - spend hours on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Often, we're distracted from what we should be doing by cat videos and funny pranks - or by something feelgood that's been shared so much on the net it's officially classed as 'viral'. Well, here are some of Midlands Zone's favourites from the past month!

Adorable **GRANDFATHER COMES OUT AT 95 YEARS OF AGE** in cute video

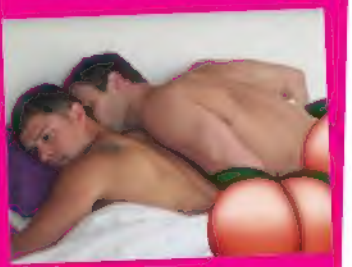
A nonagenarian has proved it's never too late to come out - by doing just that at the ripe old age of 95!

Married to his wife for 67 years and the father of two children, Roman says he knew he was gay when he was just five years of age.

Popular YouTuber Davey Wavey spoke to Roman about his experiences, in a cute interview where the now-96-year-old detailed exactly what he's looking for in a man!

You can watch it here: youtu.be/USukifYeFVo

Ed Sheeran hit gets **STEAMY GAY VIDEO** remake...



You couldn't avoid Ed Sheeran last month - and as a result, US YouTube star Bryan Hawn has given the singer's Castle On The Hill a cute gay-romance makeover.

Hawn has built up a huge online following thanks to his Butt Workout gym routines and sexy video cover versions - many with his ex-boyfriend, Will Corea.

Be sure to check it out here: youtu.be/7IVkIPqI5lo

CELEB SNAPS!

Our fave celeb Instagram snaps...

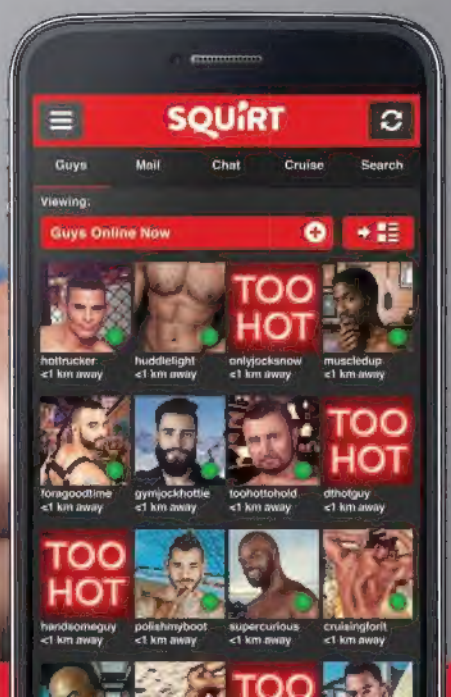
X Factor's Lloyd Daniels just keeps teasing!

We've got a real soft spot for gay footballer Robbie Rogers!

Who'd like to join Austin Armacost in the bath, then?

SQUIRT.org

The hookup site TOO HOT for the app store



THE NIGHTINGALE CLUB

STREET PARTY

29TH APRIL

HORSE MEAT DISCO

CLUB FIERCE//HOOKER CLUB

PRAWN//TEKTU//S.O.U.P

DISCO PUSSY//CIRCULAR JAW

THE ACID EXPERIMENT//HOLIDAY

AARON ZIMBRA//ALEX LAWLESS

ANDREW GIBBINS//CRAIG GORDON

DANIEL BROWN//DANIEL GLEESON

DANNY KANE//ELLIOT CROFT//HAUS OF PRAWN

JACK DYCHE//LISA SHARRED

NEIYYAR INC//SLOW JAMZ

WWW.THETICKETSELLERS.CO.UK

THE NIGHTINGALE CLUB,KENT STREET, B5 6RD